

# the *Rage Across* HEAVENS



Year  
of the  
Reckoning

BAN SPENCER '98

A Sourcebook for Werewolf: The Apocalypse™



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## *The Prophecy of Speaks-in-Silence*

As I traveled through the forest meadow, I heard the sound of the prey as the great Owl stooped upon it. His amber eyes fixed upon mine as he opened wide his bloodstained beak and cried forth this revelation, saying unto me: Behold! For in the Last Days there shall appear within the heavens a star of blood, gyring as it falls toward Gaia's breast. She shall cry out in agony, torn asunder by great upheavals. The eye of the Wurm shall gaze down upon the destruction wrought thereunto and madness shall reign among both night spawned and day born. By this and by the other signs given unto you, thou shalt know that the End Times are come.

*By Jackie Cassada and Nicky Rea*







# LEGENDS OF THE GAROU

## *Star Light, Star Bright*

Guliera Moonsister doubled over in pain and bit her lip to keep from screaming. The aging Galliard held her body tensely against the knife-sharp spasms that wracked her abdomen, willing herself to relax into the agony until it subsided. After a few seconds that seemed like centuries had passed, the pain died away. Guliera gulped in the fresh night air and felt a soft breeze tingle against the sweaty film that enveloped her skin.

On this, the shortest night of the year, she had come to this part of the forest, just outside her caern, to meditate. Her septmates, absorbed in the festivities building up to the Great Hunt, knew her location and would respond to any cry for help. Until she knew the reason for her sudden pain, she would not disturb their revels. Likewise, they would leave her to her seekings. The Sept of the Prophecy attracted Garou who felt compelled to decipher the ancient writings foretelling the Apocalypse. The members of the sept understood that most discoveries of this kind came about in solitude.

Another wave of searing agony seized her. This time she could not control a small yelp of pain. Once again the tearing feeling dwindled to nothing. She gasped in recognition. *I'm having birth pangs!*

Guliera stifled an urge to laugh at the irony. She had just passed her 50th birthday in the fall; before that, her monthly flow had ceased. In her lifetime she had birthed three children, none of whom had proven to be Garou. She had put her childbearing years behind her with a combination of relief and reluctance, intending to devote herself to her studies of prophetic texts — and to her visions.

For the third time, she felt her now-useless womb contract, going through the motions of expelling a fetus that did not exist. This time, another consciousness seemed to link fleetingly with hers — and she realized the nature of her experience.

*This is not happening to me, but it is happening somewhere.* The thought came into her head with the clarity that portended another vision. *What am I feeling, and why?* Guliera waited out the contraction, secure now that she had given a name to the pain. When she could breathe freely again, she closed her eyes and focused on the inner calm that helped her induce the vision trance. *Gaia, make me see with your eyes what you want me to know.*

The vision took her, sending her mind into a place of shifting colors and fluid forms. She allowed herself to float upon the cascading images until she could discern fragmentary pictures, like shredded snapshots, that flashed into view before giving way to another.

Her body, wracked with the pangs of childbirth, was no longer that of an aging crone. Instead, she felt the strength and vibrancy of a young woman's form — the body of a mother-to-be. In... Crinos? Yes. Then the babe must be — metis. Regret stabbed at Guliera like another contraction. Poor, foolish woman, to bring life to—

Realization fluttered behind her eyelids. Beneath the healthy flesh of her borrowed "body" lay a taint of something — some weakness of the body or mind that was all too evident. *Metis. The mother is metis, too!*

Guliera forced herself back inside the vision, anxious now to explore it as fully as she could. She sensed the presence of another person, hovering anxiously over her convulsing form. *This must be the child's father.* The metis taint played about him like a blurred aura as well. Guliera's heart pounded with the realization of the meaning of her vision. A fragment from an ancient prophecy came to her mind. *Two who should not be, in unblessed union join, bringing forth one perfect whole...* She was witnessing the fulfillment



of words spoken centuries before, preserved in a mournful passage known to her as the *Death Song of the Croatan*.

She felt a pain more intense and wracking than any that had gone before. She felt the cub erupt from her body, her half-wolf, half-human form accommodating the infant's large head. Her viewpoint shifted and she knew the thrill of fatherhood for the first time. *A perfect child, born without flaw, yet still one of the metis breed.* She sensed an urgency within her vision, pulling her away from the scene before her eyes and sending an icy chill through her body — through Guliera's body.

Guliera opened her eyes and saw the familiar forest glade around her. In the distance, she could hear the howling chants of her septmates — only a few minutes more into the rituals, so only a few minutes had passed since the vision bore her spirit away to an unknown place.

*This is not over. There is still something left to discover.* Guliera stood upright and walked slowly toward the center of the clearing. Lifting her face to the sky, she searched the darkness for the final message that would bring an end to her vision. The star-filled winter sky remained silent and uncommunicative. *What I need to find lies beyond the physical sky,* she realized, looking about for something that would serve as a conduit for her passage into the Umbra. She crossed to the edge of the clearing, where a small pool of water, covered with a thin veneer of ice, caught the light from the stars. She stared into the pool and felt herself breach the Gauntlet.

Orienting herself, she raised her eyes to the Umbral heavens, where the spirit forms of the constellations lay spread out before her. She let her gaze pass from one to the other, naming them in her mind. There was Orion, the eternal Hunter with his bow and his triple-starred belt. She searched for the two Ursas, Major and Minor, using them to locate Polaris on the end of the Little Bear's tail.

Something caught her eye, then, suddenly appearing in the sky between Ursa Major and Leo. As if the night had acquired a new eye, a red pinpoint flared once — explosively — then settled into a faint, winking speck in the sky. A new star shone in the heavens of the Umbra. Guliera felt a wave of bone-wrenching cold wash through her. *That star heralds the birth of the metis-born... or else the impossible child's birth announced the coming of this intruding star.* The thought filled her mind with a certainty. *The vision ends, but something else begins.*

...

*All around her, the landscape reeked of death. The ruins of buildings long-vanished from the earth towered over her, their vaulted ceilings and domed roofs echoing a dead age of gilded splendor, now faded into rust and decay. Beyond, a desert stretched in endless monotony, its pale gray dunes forming hills of ash and powdered bones.*

She stood poised in nervous expectation; her eyes, rimmed with ritual kohl, focused on the spectral figure that formed in the lifeless air around her. She waited for the wraith to materialize fully. The man's shaven head and tattered robes recalled the priesthood of an ancient, now dead religion.

"Speak to me, for I am listening," Deseret commanded him.

The ghostly priest bowed, his gesture at once respectful and faintly mocking.

"I have but little time," he said. "My masters would not approve of my meeting with you in this place between places. Yet I serve them in coming here, for my message to you concerns not just you and your kind but also troubles us in the shadow world."

She nodded, saying nothing.

He pointed, arm outstretched toward the sky. "Look," he said. "You can see it directly overhead."

She raised her head, letting her gaze follow his pointing finger. Above her, the skies of the Underworld, the Dark Umbra, pulsed with an eerie dim light. Stars that did not so much twinkle as gape sprinkled the dull metallic sky, looking more like holes in a battered canopy than pinpoints of brightness: Except for one point of true light.

"I see it," she said, awe filling her voice. "Like a red coal burning in a firepit of ashes."

"And yet the important point," the wraithly priest murmured, "is that it has a color. Nothing here has true color. Nothing."

"What is it?" she asked, unable to take her eyes from it. As she watched, it seemed to grow just the slightest bit brighter — and larger.

"That is something you, not I, must discover," he said. "We believe that it does not originate in our part of the otherworld, but in yours. It comes from your realm. You must determine its origin. We can do nothing but watch it grow and fear its meaning."

Deseret Path Runner woke, her body bathed in cold, clammy sweat. Her one-person tent suddenly seemed too small. She rose and left the tent to stand, naked, under the starry desert sky. Heedless of the night's chill, the young Silent Strider searched the starlit darkness. Finally, she looked eastward, midway between Ursa Major and Leo. Reaching for the small mirror that hung from a leather thong around her neck, she gazed into its reflection until she felt the world slip away from her and found herself standing in the Umbra.

The stillness of night carried over into the realm beyond the Gauntlet. Here, the desert sparkled with diamond-dust grains of rainbow-colored sand. Deseret oriented herself again, looking skyward until she found the familiar constellations, which she knew to be spirit realms in this timeless, eternal space.

There it was, angry in its baleful crimson glory, hovering like a weeping bloody eye in the heavens. The red star.

"It's true," she whispered to herself. "Amunhaktep-ra spoke truly." The long-dead priest of Ra had visited her before, in her dreams and during her frequent visits to the Shadowlands of the Dark Umbra. She suspected that blood connected them somehow, though thousands of years had passed since he last walked the earth.

A thought passed through her mind, striking her with the intensity of a spoken message. "I have looked into the Eye of the Wyrn," she said, her voice trembling. "It is time," she said again. "But time for what?"

Slipping back into the physical world, Deseret quickly gathered her traveling gear — a backpack and water skins. She dressed in a moment, broke down her tent and rolled it into a manageable bundle and prepared to travel.



...  
ASTROGATOR: Is this room secure?

Michael Links-with-Gaia snorted as he saw the words scroll across the screen of his laptop. *Damned Leech still doesn't trust me to be cautious.* He'd spent the last hour performing a rite that would ensure that no one — creature or electronic spirit — could eavesdrop or hack their way into this online meeting with the vampire who hid behind the alias of Astrogator. He squelched the impulse to lecture his online colleague, preferring to get to the business at hand.

VORTEX: We're secure. What's up?

He had met Astrogator almost a year ago at an online conference for amateur astronomers. The two of them had connected immediately; both talked about astrological lore in ways that hinted at understanding not gleaned from any book. They had exchanged theories, esoteric tidbits and shared observations for three months before finally arranging a face-to-face meeting. Michael's surprise at discovering that Astrogator was undead equaled the vampire's consternation at perceiving that Michael was a werewolf. Mutual curiosity — and an unwillingness to test one another's strength — had probably saved both their lives. The pair had carefully agreed to continue corresponding online while minimizing their personal contact with each other. It reassured Michael to no end that the two had territories on opposing sides of the country; thankfully, they'd encountered no further conflict. Yet.

ASTROGATOR: You asked for this rendezvous. Why don't you tell me "what's up"?

Michael hesitated. A few days ago, he received an urgent message from Deseret Path Runner, a Strider he had met at a Grand Moot the year before. The message contained a set of coordinates along with a request for him to check with his "other contacts" — discreetly, if possible. Michael had no idea if Deseret even suspected the extent of his "contacts," but he couldn't resist finding out if Astrogator had any knowledge of the astronomical phenomenon Deseret had alerted him to.

VORTEX: Have you checked the skies lately?

ASTROGATOR: Your skies or mine?

The Glass Walker chuckled at the distinction. The vampire knew only a little about the Umbra, a place the vampire could only brush through his ability to travel in astral space. Little by little, he'd learned a few things about the Leech. Some of the information — such as Astrogator's capability for astral projection — disturbed him so much that he insisted on extracting an oath from the Leech not to exercise that particular power in Michael's vicinity. Other bits of knowledge reassured him that, despite the vampire's undead body and Wym-tainted essence, Astrogator truly desired to share his centuries of knowledge with "worthy" acquaintances. Michael couldn't help but feel flattered that an astrologer from the



17th century showed an interest in a 22-year old part-time astronomer, part-time computer geek.

Michael was careful not to stress the "full-time Garou" that came after the other parts.

It was a strange relationship. Even so, the young Glass Walker was more than willing to absorb as much knowledge from the Leech as he could. If he should have to destroy the ancient someday, at least some of the vampire's considerable learning would not disappear.

ASTROGATOR: Are you still there?

Michael broke out of his musing and realized that he had been staring at the screen for longer than usual. *Might as well bite the bullet.*

VORTEX: Your skies. I've checked mine. Have you noticed anything odd?

Now it was Michael's turn to wait. He wondered if the Leech felt the same slight trepidation at broaching the subject of the newfound star as he did — or if the vampire could even see it. So far as Michael knew, from scanning the various posting boards and monitoring his usual collection of astronomy-related websites, no one else had remarked on the sudden appearance of a "stranger" in the skies between the constellations Ursa Major and Leo.

ASTROGATOR: Such as an unfamiliar stellar object, perhaps?

VORTEX: Don't get coy.

ASTROGATOR: If you are referring to the red-spectrum star in the northeastern sky, then, yes, I have seen something not only odd but mildly alarming.

VORTEX: Any ideas on what it is?

ASTROGATOR: I can tell you what it *\*isn't\**. I have watched the skies for 300 years without seeing its like. If it is a comet of some sort, then it is one that has not appeared in our space for centuries. What do you make of it?

Michael thought for a few seconds before wording his reply. He knew that some information should not be shared with any non-Garou, and his speculations about the nature of the red star belonged in that category. Nevertheless, he owed Astrogator some sort of response — particularly if he wanted any solid information in return.

VORTEX: I see it very distinctly in "my" space. It looks like some sort of star. A new cosmological event, perhaps?

ASTROGATOR: Maybe. I haven't attempted to view it while "traveling," though I suspect it might appear more substantial to me in a-space, as well.

VORTEX: Does it "mean" anything to you? Why does it alarm you?

Michael made himself relax as he waited for Astrogator's response. This was the loaded question. Deseret had referred to the star as the "Eye of the Wyrn." Michael needed to know if the star had any significance for the Leeches as well.

ASTROGATOR: How familiar are you with eschatology or teleology?

Michael felt a chill on the back of his neck. He knew that Astrogator referred to branches of philosophy that dealt with the "end times" and the ultimate destiny of the universe.

VORTEX: I know what the words mean.

ASTROGATOR: Most millennialists are unschooled eschatologists, looking forward to Armageddon in the belief that they are privy to the timetable for the end of the world. Most of them are wrong in their calculations.

VORTEX: Most?

*Come on, don't play games.* Michael tapped his fingers on the keyboard impatiently and waited.

ASTROGATOR: My "people," if you will allow me to refer to those like me by such a term, have our own eschatological "event" — our version of the end of the world, if you will. We call it Gehenna.

VORTEX: Sounds comforting. Isn't that the name of one of the Biblical hells?

ASTROGATOR: Knowledgeable, aren't we?

VORTEX: Spit it out!

Michael cursed himself for his outburst, hoping that Astrogator wouldn't take offense and leave the chat room. Quickly he sent an afterthought.

VORTEX: Sorry.

Michael waited for two minutes by the computer's clock before he admitted that he'd made an error of protocol. It seemed that this Leech could be as temperamental as any Garou elder. The Glass Walker realized that, much as it galled him to do so, in this exchange he would have to bow to the vampire if he hoped to gather some valuable insights about the strange star.

VORTEX: I was rude. Forgive me.

He hoped that the apology would be enough. After another thirty seconds, Astrogator's words scrolled across his screen once more. Michael let out a sigh of relief.

ASTROGATOR: No offense. This time. Shall I continue?

VORTEX: Please do.

ASTROGATOR: Some of our scholars believe that Gehenna will come only after certain signs or portents. I fear that the appearance of this sudden visitor to our cosmos may fulfill one of those signs of Gehenna. I am no scholar of these prophecies, however, and cannot say how key it is.

VORTEX: Oh. Any word on the nature of the beast?

ASTROGATOR: I'm no interpreter of omens, but my best guess — speaking in purely astronomical terms — is that we might be visited by an asteroid within the next decade or so. And no, I haven't been "watching too many movies."

VORTEX: Thanks for your speculations. I wish I had some of my own to give you. Right now I can only wonder. Keep me



posted on any changes you observe. I'll try to do the same.

After a few more inconsequential exchanges, Michael logged off, hoping that he hadn't given away too much information. He reviewed the log of his conversation with Astrogator, edited it and printed the severely revised copy to a file for forwarding to Deseret when he had the chance. If the Leeches thought the red star boded the end of the world for them as well, then he had even more to worry about.

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The old woman sat on the stoop of the battered old double-wide trailer, its rusted siding betokening too many years of neglect. By her side, a glass jar held an inch or so of dark-colored liquid. From time to time, the crone would pick up the jar and expel the juice from the chaw of tobacco tucked in one side of her mouth, against her cheek.

At her feet, a young man sat respectfully, looking away every time his grandmother spat into the jar. He kept his left arm, with its useless claw of a hand, tucked close to his side.

"So, you came as I asked you to," the old woman said after about five minutes of solemn chewing and spitting.

"Yes, grandmother," Thomas Single Claw replied. "You told me you had something to tell me about your trips into the spirit-world."

"I know what I told you," the old woman snapped, her age-wrinkled eyes crinkling with mild annoyance at the young man's impertinence. "You wolf-folk do not know how to wait," she said. "You act as if every moment were your last. I should be the one who sits on the edge of the doorway into the land of death and complains about how much time is wasted in waiting for young braves to answer an old woman's summons."

Thomas lowered his head. "I'm sorry I couldn't come sooner," he said, knowing that whatever reasons he could give her would not satisfy his Kinfolk grandmother. "I'm here, now."

The old woman nodded. "Yes, you are." She fell silent again, her eyes closed as if she had suddenly fallen asleep. Thomas knew better than to disturb her. He contented himself with looking around at the bare Oklahoma landscape, beautiful in its forlorn starkness. The sunset painted the sky in violent reds and yellows, colored by the dust that blew up from the parched earth of this part of the rez.

*She's traveling in the spirit world now, Thomas realized. Her body is here with me, but her mind walks the paths of the Umbra.* For a moment, Thomas was tempted to join her. The reflection of the setting sun off the chrome-plated railing of the trailer stoop would give him an entry for stepping sideways easily enough, but his grandmother had not invited him to join her. He waited.

Finally, the old woman's eyes opened. She looked at her grandson and pursed her lips. Her dark eyes looked troubled.

"You know where I have just been, grandson?" she asked.

"Yes, grandmother. You've been in the spirit world."

"Have you been there lately?"

Thomas nodded. "That was why I didn't come to you sooner. I was looking at — something troubling that has appeared in the skies."

The old woman dipped her head in a slow acknowledgment of her grandson's words. "So you have seen it, too, then. The red star."

"Yes," Thomas said. "Do you know what it is?"

The old woman shook her head. "I know it has no counterpart in these skies," she said, gesturing with one hand at the nearly dark sky. "At least, not yet. My brother's daughter works in an observatory in California. I have asked her to look at the sky through her telescopes there. She reports nothing out of the ordinary."

"Do you think it only exists in the spirit world, grandmother?" Thomas asked.

"I do not think that anything 'only' exists in the spirit world," the old woman said. "I believe that this red visitor builds its power there, but that it has business with this world as well. Ever since I first saw it, my dreams have been troubled."

Thomas cocked his head. "Do you think the star is the cause?"

"I would not have said anything to you if I thought otherwise," the old woman said. "I dream of a great battle in the heavens and on the earth. I do not know what the outcome will be."

"Have you talked to anyone else who has seen the star?" Thomas asked. When she found out that Thomas was going to see his grandmother, his sept leader had asked the young metis to discover whether or not anyone other than the Garou had seen the star. Because she was a shaman, one with true vision, Donna Grayfeather was almost as much at home in the Umbra as the Garou were. Somehow, it didn't surprise Thomas that his grandmother knew of the red star.

The old woman looked pensive. "I have talked to some other medicine workers," she said. "The sighting of the star came up in one of our council meetings and we decided to see how widespread the knowledge of its existence had become. So far, only medicine workers can see it."

"I have heard some of our elders call the star the Eye of the Wyrn," Thomas said.

"That is as good a name as any," his grandmother said. "The star feels sick. There is something very wrong about its presence."

"Tell me about it," Thomas said.

"I am telling you about it, grandson," Donna Grayfeather said sharply. "You need to listen harder." She waited for Thomas to recover his composure after her admonition before continuing. "I will see what else I can find out about this star for you."

"Thank you, grandmother," Thomas said, realizing that she wanted him to leave her. He stood up and walked toward his motorcycle. It was a two-hour ride to his sept and he had news to give the elders, news they would not rejoice to hear.

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"Of course I've seen the big star," the elf-child said, plaiting another daisy into the crown of grass that Sheila had just finished weaving for her.

The wind blew in from the shore, salting the air with its tang and causing the long grasses that grew on the hillside

overlooking the rocky beach to rustle with a chittering noise like a thousand whispers. Sheila O'Riordan had spent the afternoon regaling the little girl with stories from her repertoire of Irish legends. As a Galliard raised at a fellow Fianna Moon Dancer's knee, Sheila knew at least a hundred tales of heroes and princesses. The faerie child, Riona, never tired of hearing them. Even the bloody ones. *Especially* the bloody ones.

Certainly Riona bore all the marks of the fair folk. Her wild silvery hair and violet eyes gave her an ethereal look, matched by the strangely alien cast of her smile. For all her youth, the child seemed wise beyond her years. Sheila had carefully cultivated the youngling's friendship, and had come to enjoy the strangely long afternoons spent in the fae girl's presence. In return, she knew the childling savored the stories she told and the songs they sang together. The girl was ravenous — strangely hungry for stories of her kind. No wonder she treated their meetings like a feast.

Today, however, neither Riona nor Sheila felt invigorated from their meeting. Sheila had deliberately steered their conversation around to the stars, telling the child stories about Cassiopeia, Andromeda, Orion and the Great and Little Bears. Then she mentioned seeing a large red star in the sky not far from Ursa Major and the childling had confirmed her statement with her own assurance that she, too, had seen it.

"Not everyone in the hold can see it, you know," Riona added almost as an afterthought. "I see it and Rory sees it, but Oisín and Moira and Cullan can't. Lord Douglas sees it, too. But I'm not supposed to tell you about them, so you shouldn't pay any attention to what I just said." Riona giggled at her own words.

"Have you spoken to any of them about the star?" Sheila asked.

Riona nodded. "Lord Douglas says it's a sign that the Endless Winter is on its way. He says that Rory and I can see the star because we are young and that he can see it because he's almost ready to fade away. Oisín and Moira and Cullan are in the middle and don't see it because they don't think about seeing it."

Sheila frowned. The child had a tendency to speak in riddles, like the rest of her ilk. But there was something... not right about her voice, a seriousness that belied Riona's apparent innocence.

"Lord Douglas says," the child recited with borrowed authority, eyes still focused on her daisies, "that the star is actually the sun of Endless Winter and that it will be the only light in the sky when that time comes."

Sheila shivered despite the day's relative warmth. "That sounds like a bad time for you all," she said.

Riona's head bobbed up and down emphatically. "It's the worst!" she answered. "The Long Winter means that no one will know how to dream or sing or change. Everything will freeze and all of us will just fade away or turn to ice or stone."

"Sounds like the Apocalypse to me," Sheila muttered.

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"Jeez, DeVino, what's so important about a sheet of numbers?" Jasper Eats-Wyrm-Guts fidgeted with his chipped mug and shifted uneasily in the diner's vinyl booth. The place was almost deserted at 2 a.m., but the lure of cheap coffee kept bringing folks in. The other patrons, mostly late-shifters on break and college students desperately pulling all-nighters, ignored the two men at the back table. "I thought you'd gotten a job in that ugly strongbox of a building to sniff out the Enemy, not to keep some hotshot star-watcher's books for him."

"Just try to follow my line of thought," DeVino said, shoving a crumpled piece of paper at Jasper. "I'm telling you, this joker might be onto something like what we saw in the Umbra last night."

"OK," Jasper said, trying to focus on the page in front of him. "Run that gobbledy-gook by me one more time — only in English."

DeVino sighed. "Alright, here's what I'm trying to tell you. For several nights running, the jerk has taken some observations on the placement of stars of various magnitudes."

"Magna...? Brightness, you mean."

"More or less."

"Well, I can follow you so far," Jasper said. "But that doesn't seem like anything earthshaking to me."

"I haven't even begun," replied DeVino. "There's nothing to follow yet. Look at the figures on the paper I gave you."

Jasper peered at the wrinkled page. "So? They're a string of numbers. Lined up by size. Big deal."

"That's right," DeVino said. "This guy has arranged the stars he was observing in the order of their magnitude every night for three weeks. Look at week two."

Jasper ran his grungy thumbnail across the top, halting at the column marked "Wk. 2." "Okay, now what?" he muttered.

"See the third number from the bottom?" Jasper nodded.

"That measurement suddenly appears on the list — as if from nowhere," DeVino whispered reverently.

"And this means?"

The Ragabash shook his head despairingly. "What I'm saying is that the number I just pointed out represents an anomaly — something that doesn't belong with the other figures. I think our scientist is mystified by it, or else he's round-filed his results because he can't explain them."

Jasper felt something click — hard — inside his head. "You're saying that it represents a star that shouldn't be on the list."

"Yes!" DeVino said, his voice like a clap of thunder. "Yes," he repeated, lowering his voice and looking around quickly to see how much attention he had drawn to himself and Jasper. When he was satisfied that no one had even noticed his outburst, he continued. "Now, look at the note he's scrawled down here by the figures that represent the non-existent star."

Jasper peered intently at the scratchy writing. "Visual observations produce no confirming evidence.' What's that supposed to mean?"



DeVino shrugged. "I think he's saying that when he uses a telescope, he doesn't see anything, but that whatever measuring device he's using says that there's a star there."

"So now you're saying that the star that shouldn't be on this list isn't there to begin with."

"That's precisely what I'm saying. Now, three guesses as to what part of the sky houses this 'anomaly'?"

"Holy shit!" Jasper breathed. "You mean that this astronomer can see the star that Michael's been so hot about? The one that just popped into the Umbra a little while ago? The one you can see even in the city's Pen—"

"That's what I think this piece of paper means," DeVino said. "I could be wrong, but I think our scientist has got some talents that most of his colleagues don't possess."

Jasper's lip curled. "Not one of us, and he ain't a Leech... Magician."

DeVino nodded. "Something like that. I've been watching him whenever I think I can get away with it. He's got gizmos in his lab that I've never seen before and I can't tell what they're supposed to do. This is the first time I've been able to make sense of anything I found in his garbage."

"I think we need to tell Michael that this star he's trying to track down is showing itself to some questionable folks," Jasper said.

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The night air held just a tinge of coming winter, but the small group of people who stood atop the hill behind Hinland House had dressed warmly. Gemma Roberts felt her heart catch as she carefully pointed out the stars that made up the constellations of Leo and Ursa Major to her patients. For the last six weeks, she'd overseen these nightly excursions — approved and authorized by the mental hospital's progressive director as "educational therapy." Ostensibly, Gemma conducted an "Appreciation of Astronomy" class for her more functional wards as part of a general program intended to increase her patients' awareness of the real world and promote social interaction among individuals. Her real reason, however, had to do with a request from her sept leader based on information gathered from a number of Garou from all over the world.

"Some of us believe," her sept leader had told her, "that when mortals — not vampires or faeries or mages — are able to see the star we call Anthelios with their naked eyes, the Prophecy of the Phoenix will be fulfilled and the last days of the Apocalypse will be upon us."

Gemma, therefore, had begun an experiment with the cases under her care at Hinland House. So far, none of them saw what Gemma's eyes could carefully catch: the baleful red star that winked insolently at her from its spot in the northern sky. Some Garou called the star the Eye of the Wyrms, but Gemma preferred its other name — Anthelios — the anti-sun.

She felt a minor twinge of guilt at the thought that she was using her patients as guinea pigs. Like most members of her tribe, Gemma believed that the Garou's guardianship of Gaia's earth included all the creatures who inhabited the

world — even the humans. Nevertheless, she had a duty to discharge and the residents of the mental hospital seemed to enjoy a chance to get away from their daily routine of individual therapy, group counseling sessions and far too many remedial medications.

"Mrs. Boudreau, can you find the two stars that point to the North Star?" she asked an elderly woman who stood looking steadfastly at her feet. Claudia Boudreau suffered from profound melancholia — or clinical depression. Gemma thought she could see small but significant signs of progress in the woman's responses to outside stimuli, but tonight, she seemed more withdrawn than usual.

"I can! I can!" Peter hopped over to Gemma and tugged on her parka. The enthusiasm in his voice came as much from a genuine desire to "please" the teacher as from his chronic manic state. The young man pointed out a pair of stars, correctly identifying the two stars that made up the outer edge of the Big Dipper. Then he pointed out another pair of completely unrelated stars. "And there they are!" His frantic eyes sought and found yet a third pair. Gemma sighed. Peter would continue pointing out pairs of stars all night until she directed his attention to something else.

As she made her rounds, talking to each of her patients in turn and questioning them about what they saw, Gemma gradually became aware of a low muttering from Mr. Daws, a wizened old man with Alzheimer's. He reminded her of her own grandfather, who had died from the disease just before Gemma underwent her First Change. She hoped that the innate Garou resistance to disease in general would protect her from the living death she had witnessed as her grandfather's personality faded to nothing.

She edged closer to hear his words, then wished that she had chosen to ignore him. He was standing, hands shoved into his pockets, rocking back and forth on his heels, his face upturned to the northern sky. "Red, red, red, red," he chanted over and over again.

Gemma tapped him gently on the shoulder, trying to keep her voice from trembling as she spoke. "What's red, Mr. Daws?" she asked.

"The big red eye is in the sky," he said, removing one hand from his coat pocket and pointing toward the space between Ursa Major and Leo. "I'm ready to go home now, dear. It's too red for me. It wants to look inside my head."

Gemma looked in the direction Mr. Daws had indicated. *He sees it.* Anthelios still shone only dimly in the physical sky. Most Garou still did not know of its existence. In the Umbra, however, the Eye of the Wyrms radiated like a miniature red sun. Humans shouldn't be able to see it at all — not yet.

"Let's go back inside," Gemma said to her charges. "Tomorrow we'll look at the stars of the southern sky." Tomorrow she would report to her sept leader that one of her patients — a very old man with a tenuous grip on the real world — claimed to see a "red eye" in the sky. She wondered when "normal" folk would begin chanting "red, red, red..."

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# the *Rage Across* HEAVENS™

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# Introduction: Darkening Skies

Watch the stars, see how they run  
Watch the stars, see how they run  
You know the stars run down at the setting of the sun  
Watch the stars, see how they run.

— Pentangle, "Watch the Stars"

I traveled to Hong Kong in November of 1998 just to watch the meteor shower. From my vantage point atop a hill away from the bright lights of the city proper, I drank in the frightening splendor of the Leonids. After a while I stopped counting, stopped thinking about the movies I'd seen about large rocks plummeting from the skies, stopped feeling anything but awe at the display of celestial fireworks. I resisted the temptation to step sideways and view the event from the other side of the Gauntlet; I was, after all, in the land of the Hong Kong Glass Walkers on sufferance. I'd given my word that I wouldn't interfere in their affairs, and that included disturbing their Umbral balance (whatever they meant by that). I kept to my Homid form and played sightseer. I left as soon as the show was over.

Back home with my pack, I tried to share with them what I felt as I watched pieces of the sky rocket into the atmosphere. It's hard for a Ragabash like me to be serious, even at the most solemn moments, but I think my packmates caught a whiff of my awe at what I had seen.

Maybe I pay special attention to the stars because of my auspice. When Luna hides her face from the world, you see more stars than on other nights. I can't help but feel a kinship with the "lesser" lights.

In retrospect, I regret not taking the chance to step into the Umbra at the time of the Leonids shower. If I had stepped sideways, despite the risks of offending the local spirits (not to mention the local Garou), I might have seen the thing that makes my own eyewitness account of the Leonids seem pale in comparison. I might have seen "it" — the new Umbral star that some say announces the beginning of the Final Battle.

— from the journal of Silas Starcatcher

The battle for Gaia's survival rages throughout the world. On the land, the servants of the Wyrms blast the forests, bring down mountains and blight the fertile fields. The waters, too, bear the scars of rapine and plunder — the seas, lakes and rivers are all too often marked by vomited-up toxins of unnatural origin. The Garou devote their lives and deaths to holding back the inexorable advance of the Great Enemy, but even their efforts too often seem little more than a holding action.

As preoccupied as they are with the onslaught of the Wyrms on this side of the Gauntlet, an increasing number Garou view the Umbra as almost peripheral to their cause. They recognize the spirit world as necessary to their existence, a place of wonder and mystery as well as a convenient route to get from one place to another.

Yet only a few of Gaia's warriors realize that a great war also rages across the Umbra, centering in the Aetherial Realm and mirroring (or instigating) the actions in the physical world. Even as a new star, glowing with an eerie blood-red light, appears dimly in the Umbral skies, the ancient realms of the Celestines tremble with the shockwaves that radiate outward from that unwelcome and foreboding visitor. Has the Wyrms opened its eye prior to its long-dreaded awakening? What strange new events lie in the not-so-distant future for the chosen warriors of Gaia?

## *A Time of Omens*

As millennial fever strikes the mortal population of the World of Darkness, so too, do the Garou feel a sense of urgency and foreboding. Instead of responding to the advent of an artificial and arbitrary date, however, the Garou find themselves surrounded by real evidence of the End Times. Already, many of the signs foretold by the Prophecy of the Phoenix have come to pass. The seas run black and foul from a steady stream of pollution; the skies choke with noxious gases and all around, the Earth cries out in pain from the weight of too many people and too little untainted land.

Now a baleful sign looms in the fabric of the Umbra itself and the whole of the Tellurian hovers on the edge of uneasy anticipation. As yet, only a few observant Garou—most of them habitual Umbral travelers—have seen the red star and know of its existence. None of these observers know exactly what the star portends, but all agree that it bodes no good for the world.

Coincidental with the appearance of this baleful portent, however, another "sign" has occurred—this one in the physical world. The birth of a unique Garou cub has thrown all the tribes into consternation, for the child's conception contradicts one of the most sacred laws of Gaia. Two metis fall in love and produce a child—a perfect Crinos without any discernible flaw.

Does this birth signify that Gaia has lifted the curse of infertility from her metis children? The Children of Gaia who know of the event believe this is true. But the Children have often been called blind optimists. Silver Fangs and Shadow Lords apprised of the birth maintain that it indicates that the Wyrms' corrupting influence now extends into the very core of Garou existence, undermining the Litany itself. Despite attempts to keep the metis birth a secret, word has begun to spread among the Garou, causing panic in some and engendering in others a tentative hope.

## *A Search For Answers*

Beset by this double quandary—a metis birth and an ominous new star—the Garou seek answers in the Umbra and in the physical world. What they find gives them little comfort. In the Aetherial Realm, where the red star claims its portion of the Umbral skies, the Celestines and Starspirits seem uneasy, as if hearing the first trumpet calls of impending battle. Signs of unrest are everywhere as the spirits of the Aetherial Realm rouse to battle. In the physical

world, the rumors of the metis birth range far and wide, polarizing the Garou. Some seek to destroy the cub, while others search for defenders to protect what may prove the salvation of the Garou. If metis can breed, the cub's advocates charge, then we no longer need fear the depletion of our population. But even these supporters are wary. Too many tales hint that the cub that should not be is one of a kind—and it is fated to carry the banner of the Wyrms.

In their desperation to discover the true meaning of the omens, the Garou run the risk of breaking down into even more factions than already exist. They cannot afford this luxury. As the signs spoken of in the Prophecy of the Phoenix become clearer and the last days before the Apocalypse grow fewer in number, the Garou must avoid the temptation to wage war against one another over whose interpretations will carry the day. Yet Gaia's warriors find it difficult to avoid giving way to their Rage. That curse remains with them.

## *A Time for Action*

*If you wish to succeed, consult three old people.*

—fortune cookie insert

The Garou face a formidable challenge in the next few years. First and foremost, Gaia's warriors need to gather information as quickly as possible on the nature of the red star. This involves not only consulting with the elders of all the tribes and searching through the various versions of the Prophecy of the Phoenix and other legends, but also includes traveling far into the Aetherial reaches, where the effects of the star are most apparent. Is the object, in fact, a star? Or is it something much more sinister—such as the literal eye of the Wyrms? For now, only the Garou (and certain other Awakened creatures) can see the object, and then only in the Umbra. But the star grows in size and magnitude daily; many fear that it will eventually come to dominate the perpetual twilight of the Umbral skies. When that happens, what effect will this have on the physical world?

The metis-born cub presents another mystery to the Garou. What does the child's existence mean? Is the child a cause or a result of the impending Apocalypse? Should the cub be allowed to live? Will destroying it now that it is born change anything? Again, the answers lie hidden in ancient prophecies.

The seeds of the Apocalypse have their roots not in the physical world, but in the Umbra. The Garou cannot content themselves with doing battle solely on the material plane. The axiom that lies at the basis of most kinds of magic holds true for the future of Gaia. What happens among the stars (Umbral or otherwise) does have repercussions on earth. As above, so below.

## *Theme and Mood*

This is a book about the final days. As such, it deals with the culmination of a long chain of events that encompass the history of the Garou from their distant beginnings at the dawn of the world. Prophecies and omens play an important part in predicting and preparing for the Apocalypse, yet the



correct interpretations of ambiguous and sometimes deliberately misleading signs carry great risks. Uncertainty weaves its thread through the tapestry of events.

Although the Garou do not relish admitting to fear, a gnawing sense of dread consumes more and more of them as they consider that time may run out before they can adequately ready themselves for the Apocalypse at hand. The sound of the clock counting the days and hours and minutes until "doomsday" reverberates in the ears of the Garou with maddening precision. So much remains to be done, and time grows far too short, far too quickly.

As desperation fills the hearts of the Garou, the spirit of imminent battle also blazes like an unquenchable flame within the core of their being. Gaia's warriors finally have a clear-cut mandate — from the stars, so to speak — to take action. It only remains for them to discover the nature of their undertaking. And to do that, the Garou need to find their answer in the depths of the earth and in the vault of the stars.

## How to Use this Book

Besides providing storytellers and players with information about the Aetherial Realm and its denizens, **Rage Across the Heavens** explores the cosmology of the Garou and the effect that the stars and planets — and their spirits — have on the Changing Breeds.

Also, the Year of the Reckoning has come. This sourcebook, therefore, presents ideas for chronicles that echo across the Umbral realms and includes a mini-chronicle that revolves around a seminal event of the coming Apocalypse. The events outlined in this book should catalyze the Garou, alerting them to the fact that it is time to bring their plans to fruition. The time for preparation is over; now is the time for action.

Each Storyteller has her own idea about what the Apocalypse is and what it means for the Garou. Thus, the story that appears in Chapter Four presents a broad outline which Storytellers can customize for their own chronicles rather than a cut-and-dried series of events for the characters to interact with. No "default" plot exists which happens if the characters do nothing; the events of the Apocalypse's opening salvo play out according to the actions of the characters.

The **Introduction: Darkening Skies** presents a general outline of the material contained in the rest of the book, as well as a bibliography and a lexicon of useful terms.

**Chapter One: Dance of the Celestines** provides an overview of the Aetherial Realm, the Celestines and Star-spirits that inhabit it. It also details the correspondences that link this realm with the physical manifestations of the planets, stars and other heavenly bodies that make up the earthly skies.

**Chapter Two: Speaking the Language of the Stars** discusses astrology from the point of view of the Garou, including symbolism, potential celestial influences and other interesting hooks.

**Chapter Three: Storytelling: Omens, Signs and Portents** reveals the various interpretations of The Prophecy of the Phoenix and other signs of the coming battle against the

Wyrms. In addition, this chapter gives several ideas for stories involving prophecies and omens.

**Chapter Four: Anthelios Raging: A Story of the Last Days** presents a complete framework for a story that places Garou characters in the middle of a cosmic battle for the preservation (or destruction) of a star-fated cub.

**Chapter Five: Heavenly Laws** supplies Storytellers and players with numerous astrological Gifts, rites, Merits and Flaws as well as other game-related tools that can add interest and color to **Werewolf** chronicles.

Finally, the **Appendix: Those Who Walk Among the Stars** details a few personalities among the Garou, including members of the Sept of the Stars and individuals who might involve themselves with the events outlined in *Anthelios Raging*.

## Lexicon

The following list of words includes terminology used by either astronomers or astrologers, as well as some terms specific to this book.

**Anthelios (An-THÉE-lee-ose)** — a new star that now shines in the outer reaches of the Aetherial Realm; the "anti-sun"; "the Eye of the Wyrms."

**Aphelion** — The point in the orbit of any body in the solar system when it is farthest from the sun.

**Asteroids** — Rocky objects located in the outer reaches of the solar system, forming a belt of space debris that ranges between the inner and outer planets. Many scientists believe that asteroids are the remains of planets that once existed.

**Astrology** — The study of the stars as a means of predicting future events or understanding past and present situations.

**Astronomy** — The scientific study of the stars, planets and other phenomena of space.

**Ecliptic** — The plane of the earth's orbit about the sun. With the exception of Pluto, the other planets also orbit close to that plane.

**Equinox** — The time during which the position of the earth and sun result in equal durations of day and night. This occurs twice a year, at the beginning of spring (the vernal equinox) and the beginning of fall (the autumnal equinox).

**Eshtarra (Esh-TAR-rah), the Songteller** — The name of the planetary Incarna of Earth that represents the second month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Hakahe (Huh-KAH-hey), the Ebon Whisperer** — The name of the planetary Incarna associated with the hidden planet Vulcan, the sixth month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Horoscope** — Literally, a picture or chart depicting the sky at a particular moment.

**Izarra Tarana (Iz-ZAR-ruh Ta-RAH-nuh), the Star Singers** — The Garou name for the Pleiades star cluster.

**Katanka-Sonnak (Kuh-TONG-kuh SAHN-NAHK), the Wind Rider** — The planetary Incarna linked to the Sun, associated with the fifth month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Light Year** — The distance that light travels in one year; equal to about 10 million million kilometers.

## Bibliography

Books on astronomy and astrology abound. The following list of titles represent a small sample of the books available for Storytellers and players to use in enhancing their Werewolf characters or adding a "cosmic" touch to their chronicles.

*The Constellations: How They Came To Be*, by Roy Gallant provides a simple introduction to the major constellations as well as to the myths which gave rise to the names of the various star groups.

*A Walk Through the Heavens: a Guide to Stars and Constellations and Their Legends*, by Milton D. Heifetz and Wil Tirion provides numerous orientation charts and instructions for do-it-yourself star-watching.

*Astronomy*, by Donald H. Menzel, presents basic, though somewhat dated, information in a coffee-table book format, complete with black and white as well as color photos, charts and diagrams.

*40 Nights to Knowing the Sky: a Night-by-Night Skywatching Primer*, by Fred Schaaf, offers a self-guiding tutorial for learning about the night sky.

*Nightwatch: an Equinox Guide to Viewing the Universe*, by Terence Dickinson, provides information on locating various constellations and star clusters as well as instructions on the use of telescopes.

*Tibetan Astrology*, by Philippe Cornu, describes the cosmos of ancient Tibet and the relationship between Tibetan, Chinese and Hindu concepts of astrology.

*Astronomy Through The Ages*, by Robert Wilson, offers a somewhat scholarly view of the history of astronomy (including an explicit denunciation of astrology).

*Making Sense of Astrology*, by Ronny Martens and Tim Trachet, scrutinize astrology from the point of view of science while simultaneously offering a lucid explanation of some of astrology's more obscure points.

*Chinese Astrology: Plain and Simple*, by Suzanne White, provides a chatty popular guide to the twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac à la Linda Goodman's *Sun Signs*.

*Do It Yourself Astrology*, by Lyn Birkbeck, and *The Complete Book of Astrology*, by Ada Aubin and June Firkin, provide charts galore as well as interpretations for those who aspire to cast horoscopes for their Garou characters.

*Heavenly Knowledge*, by Dr. Fiorella Terenzi, attempts to bridge the gap between scientific study of astronomy and the spiritual appreciation of the cosmos.

*Starwalking: Shamanic Practices for Traveling Into the Night Sky*, by Page Bryant, combines astronomy and astrology with a New Age awareness.

*The Celtic Lunar Zodiac*, by Helena Paterson, concentrates on the lunar and planetary aspects of astrology rather than the constellations. (A beautiful book!)

*The Box of Stars: a Practical Guide to the Night Sky and To Its Myths and Legends*, by Catherine Tennant, offers a unique combination of book and lavishly illustrated punch-cards to use in "viewing" the sky.

*A History of Astrology*, by Derek and Julia Parker, provides an account of the rise of astrology and its persistence through centuries of disbelief.

*Ancient Hindu Astrology for the Modern Western Astrologer*, by James T. Braha, approaches the astrology of India in a manner accessible to those familiar with standard western astrology.

*The Complete Prophecies of Nostradamus*, ed. by Henry C. Roberts, although one of many available translations and interpretations, imparts a unique flavor to the prophecies, reminiscent of the language found in the sacred texts of early cultures.

*Conversing With the Planets*, by Anthony Aveni, offers a culture-specific approach to the study of astronomy and astrology, focusing on the truths behind the myths of the cosmos.

*Exploring Your Solar System*, by Elizabeth Rathbun, part of the National Geographic Society's Books for World Explorers series, gives a "you are there" guided tour of the solar system and beyond. Geared toward children, this book presents information clearly and vividly.

*The Wrong Way Comet and Other Mysteries of Our Solar System*, by Barry Evans, presents 60 short but entertaining essays by the author of the syndicated astronomy column, *StarWatch*.

*Other Worlds*, by Terence Dickinson, consists of two-page spreads on the planets and moons of the solar system. Though written for children, it is packed with useful information.

*The Usborne Book of Space Facts*, by Struan Reid, delivers a plethora of interesting info bites about the universe.

*The Young Oxford Book of Astronomy*, by Simon and Jacqueline Mitton, provides basic information on the planets, stars, galaxies and other phenomena of space.

*The Planets: a Guided Tour of Our Solar System Through the Eyes of America's Space Probes*, by Nigel Henbest, provides a lavishly illustrated view of the planets, courtesy of NASA's eyes in the skies.

Additional titles on astrology, astronomy and mythology can be found in any library or bookstore.



**Lu-Bat (LOO BAHT), the Peaceful Counselor** — The planetary Incarna of Saturn, associated with the tenth month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Magnitude** — A term used to describe the relative brightness of objects in the sky. The greater the magnitude, the lower the "number"; thus, stars with a magnitude of 1 or two are much brighter than those with a magnitude of 8 or 9. The human eye can see stars with a magnitude of up to 7. Anything greater can only be seen with a telescope.

**Matagar (Mat-tah-GARR), the Lord of Beginnings** — Another name for Sirius, the Dog Star.

**Meros (MARE-OSE), the Wandering Mystic** — The planetary Incarna linked to Pluto and to the eighth month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Meteor/meteor shower** — A cluster of small particles traveling through space. When the earth passes through a meteor field, the planet's atmosphere causes them to burst into flame, leaving a fiery trail across the sky. Some meteor fields, like the Leonids, provide spectacular shows of light and fire on a regular basis (every 33 years or so).

**Mitanu (Mit-TAH-noo), the Clever Rogue** — The planetary Incarna of Mercury and the ruler of the third month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Nerigal (Nare-i-GAUL), the Ice Warrior** — The name given to the planetary Incarna of Mars, associated with the first month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Orrery** — A reproduction of the solar system (usually) as an aid for study or meditation. Some orreries are small, while others are large enough to walk around inside. The Sept of the Stars has constructed a spirit orrery in the Aetherial Realm and uses it as a caern.

**Perihelion** — The nearest point to the sun in the orbit of a celestial body.

**Retrograde** — The apparent backward motion of a planet or other orbiting body; retrograde motion is a function of perception. A planet in retrograde only appears to move backwards in its orbit.

**Rorg, the Many-Taloned Hunter** — The planetary Incarna associated with the asteroid belt and the unofficial "thirteenth" sign of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Ruatma (Roo-AHT-mah), the Shadowed One** — The planetary Incarna who presides over Uranus and the eleventh month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Shantar (SHAN-tar), the Loom Maker** — The planetary Incarna of Neptune, associated with the twelfth month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Sidereal Year** — One full revolution of the Earth around the sun, based on the positions of the stars. This is the year used by astrologers for the purpose of casting horoscopes.

**Sokhta (Soak-TAH), the Lambent Lady** — The name of the planetary Incarna associated in the Garou lunar zodiac with the Moon.

**Solar Year** — One complete orbit of the Earth around the sun as measured by the relationship of the Earth's axial tilt, thus measuring the relative position of the Earth with regard to the sun. The Western calendar uses the solar year instead of the sidereal year.

**Solstice** — The time of year during which the earth is either at its nearest or furthest point from the sun. The summer solstice marks the nearest approach of the earth to the sun and signifies the beginning of summer; the winter solstice occurs when the earth is furthest from the sun and heralds the onset of winter.

**Songan (SONG-gun), The Noble Brother** — The name given by the Garou to the comet Chiron.

**Tambiyah (Tam-BYE-yuh), the Veiled Mother** — The planetary Incarna of Venus, patron of the seventh month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Vegarda (Veh-GAR-duh), the Lady of the North** — Another name for Polaris, the North Star.

**Yakecen (YACK-uh-SEN), The Fallen Singer** — The name given to a black hole in the far edges of the galaxy.

**Yaraan-Doo (Yah-ray-yun-DOO), The Dying One** — The name attributed by the Garou to the Southern Cross.

**Zarok (ZAH-ROCK), the Crowned Ruler** — The planetary Incarna associated with Jupiter and the ninth month of the Garou lunar zodiac.

**Zenith** — That point in the sky immediately and vertically above an observer.

**Zodiac** — A belt of stars that roughly parallels the elliptic of the earth and is thus visible in both northern and southern hemispheres. This sky field contains all twelve "signs" used in many astrological calculations.





# Chapter One: Dance of the Celestines

*Philosophy is written in this grand book — I mean the universe — which stands continually open to our gaze, but it cannot be understood unless one first learns to comprehend the language and interpret the characters in which it is written.*

— Galileo Galilei, *Il Saggiatore*

So at last you turn to us. Why do you seek this knowledge now, clamoring for our attention like petulant children, demanding answers? The red star grows, you say? Did we not warn you long ago? But you were too busy. Too busy lusting for the heat of battle, too busy impressing your sept with your honor and your glory. Finally, you learn wisdom! We must hope it does not come too late.

Still, we must try, regardless of the outcome. If you would walk the paths of prophecy and learn your part in the gathering tempest, follow me now. I am Antares Bitter-Truth and I am assigned the task of taking you to the most respected guide among us, for you will need her skills if you are to traverse the heavens and read the signs you find there. But this time before you set out on that journey, you will listen; this time knowledge *will* precede action, for if you don't know where you're going or what you seek, you will waste yourself fighting shadows.

So be seated and I will begin your education. No protests about your accomplishments and rank, please. Here you are cubs and I am your teacher. It doesn't matter to me what battles you've won, what foes you've defeated. We begin now as if you know nothing, for that way I can be certain I do not send you out unprepared. If you have heard or experienced this before, I apologize for the repetition. If

you have traveled the Umbral realms before, you already know why I reiterate certain lessons. So let us begin.

## **Umbral Travel 101**

You would not be here with me now if you had not already learned to step sideways. This ability to enter the spirit realms is one of Gaia's greatest and most necessary gifts to us. Let me go over the most common knowledge concerning the Velvet Shadow, so that we all can speak in the same language.

Gaia lies at the center of the Realm-System of the Near Umbra. The entire Near Umbra falls under her influence, though other Celestines also work their wills in portions of it.

The Umbra is a dark and mysterious place where logic does not necessarily prevail. The Umbral sun — Helios to some of us, Katanka-Sonnak to others — does not shine through most of the Umbra. Agents of the Wyrn do their work during the day when the light of Luna does not shine. Garou travel moon paths through the Umbra at night under the radiance of the moon. The moon's phase corresponds to its phase on earth.

Most of you have traveled here before, at least as far as the Penumbra. Some of you have trod upon moon bridges moving from one caern to another through Umbral space. You have even entered one region or another to track down

Banes or request a spirit's teaching. We all agree that you know the most basic forms of Umbral travel. Nonetheless, for the sake of the cubs among us, I'll briefly outline the various ways to get around in the Umbra — and how they will help us reach the realms of the lords of the planets.

## *Moon Bridges*

Probably the most familiar, safest and easiest paths we know, moon bridges pass through the Umbra but actually connect one point on Earth to another. Almost every moon bridge requires that a Pathstone be used to form it, as well as permission from the spirits who protect the connecting sites. Lunes and the totem spirits associated with both destinations guard the moon bridge. Moon bridges last only a short time, flashing like lightning through the Aetherial Realm. Those created through the Gift of Bridge Walker require no Pathstones, nor are they guarded by anything other than the Galliard's own powers. Moon bridges are much like semi-transparent rainbows, arching up and over from one point to the next. Those that are long established along well-traveled routes tend to look more solid. Traveling on a moon bridge is like trying to float through the air like eiderdown while stretching your legs out to make contact with the substance of the bridge. Some of us never get used to it, while others seem to take it in stride from their very first jaunt. You can theoretically "hitch" onto moon bridges from here in the Aetherial Realm, as the highest point of their arc passes through the clouds — but if uninvited, you're sure to catch trouble from the guardians. However, the bridges aren't so useful for Umbral destinations, so we won't be using those.

## *Moon Paths*

These pathways appear in the Umbra at night when Luna shines. They appear similar to moon bridges, but shine more brightly and tend to look more substantial. Where moon bridges have a decided arc to them, moon paths often lie flat or ascend steeply, plunge abruptly and even form loops similar to cloverleaf highways where they intersect. Despite the steepness, it always feels as though you are traveling on level ground. Moon paths crisscross each other, connecting most locales within the Umbra. We use them for most of our travel within the Umbra, although they alter depending on the phases of Sokhta. During the full moon, they are the safest way through the Umbra, being guarded by Lunes along their length. The gibbous moon brings with it Moon Paths that are partially incomplete or missing. Even so, special howls taught to Garou by Sokhta may open such paths completely, allowing passage. During the half moon, the paths are difficult to read. Spirits may claim a portion of the path and force those who would travel along "their" way to negotiate for passage. At the crescent moon, the moon paths fade into almost total obscurity, requiring great perception and an understanding of enigmas to discern correct routes. Banes are known to ambush travelers during the crescent moon, yet during this mystical time, the moon paths are said to reach more deeply into the Umbra than at any other time.

Finally, during the new moon, the paths are all but invisible. Those who would traverse a moon path during this phase of the moon must solve mysteries within themselves to open their eyes to the inner sight required. Wyrminions freely roam during the new moon and the paths themselves are rumored to entangle one another and reshuffle themselves into different routes. Remember this.

## *The Weaver's Web*

This is not one of my personal favorites, but it is possible for Garou to climb through the Weaver's Webs, which interconnect with almost everything in the Umbra. As they are incredibly complex, reading the webs takes either a Glass Walker trick or the aid of a Weaver-spirit. Summoning and communicating with a Weaver-spirit is a challenge in itself. The good news is that due to the static nature of the Weaver, the Webs don't alter; once a pathway has been found, it remains the same unless something rends it. From a distance, Weaver Webs look like a tangled skein of pale yarn. Coming closer, you can make out the spidery patterns, though sometimes it looks as though the spider responsible for creating the web was drunk at the time there are so many offshoots and connecting lines. Moving through the webs takes patience, for like earthly spider webs, these are also somewhat sticky and tend to entangle hands, feet, or anything sticking out such as staves, klaives or backpacks. Struggling to free oneself from being stuck tends to attract the attention of those who constructed the web. Climbing about in what many consider enemy territory isn't the best way to remain safe, in any case. You can meet everything from Weaver Incarna to Weaver Spiders who try to calcify you to Wyrmin-taint on the Webs.

## *Airts*

Airts, or spirit tracks, are created by spirits using their innate Airt sense. Though they are not guarded by Lunes, most such pathways serve as common routes for the spirits who created them. Such spirits may prove friendly or hostile. Without a spirit guide, Airts are impossible to find. This is because without assistance from those who can sense them, Airts are invisible to us. Further they twist about, moving in strange ways that many Garou find impossible to follow. Once a spirit agrees to act as a guide, it is just possible to feel the existence of the Airt. Rather than a function of sight, you get an odd taste or smell when on the track, though some Garou have told me they hear chiming bits of music with each step they take.

## *Spirit Gates*

Spirit gates occur naturally between linked sites. All Domains contain spirit gates that lead back to their empowering realms. Though they provide almost instantaneous travel, most spirit gates are not intended to be used by Garou and many cannot be utilized while within a physical body. Garou using the Gift of Astral Mind don't have that problem. Spirit gates are almost always guarded and the spirits may prove beneficent or unfriendly. Anchorheads are a type of spirit gate that open



between the Near and Deep Umbras. You can recognize a spirit gate by its glow and its sound. Areas that act as spirit gates always have a slight phosphorescent light around them and give off an almost inaudible visceral hum. When activated, the gate's tone rises several octaves and quavers.

## *Solar Winds*

Although scientists refer to the streams of electromagnetic particles that streak outward from the sun as the solar wind, in the physical realm it's not possible to utilize them for travel. That isn't true here in the Umbra. In the Aetherial Realm we can ride those winds, following their natural trails out to each of the other domains. The solar winds emanate from Katanka-Sonnak's domain, wafting outward to encompass the domains of all the other Celestines. The main drawback to riding the winds is that they sometimes veer wildly off course due to Aetherial storms. When a storm interferes with the solar winds, they can gather the force of a hurricane within minutes, tossing anyone in their path aside, ripping them apart or whirling them up into vortexes that dump them somewhere else in the Umbra — not necessarily within the Aetherial Realm. Still, those who are both lucky and knowledgeable can use the winds to travel from one domain to another far more quickly than along the moon paths or star roads.

You know all this, so you say? Well, I told you we'd begin at the rudimentary level. So, since you all possess such detailed knowledge of Umbral travel, we'll move directly to the Aetherial Realm.

## *The Aetherial Realm*

Have you ever wanted to leap for the moon and wished you could float up into the heavens and touch it? That isn't possible in the physical realm. But here in the Umbra, in the Aetherial Realm, physical laws have no meaning. Look up at the vast reaches overhead. The Aetherial Realm stretches as far as the Membrane and holds an unknown number of Anchorheads and powerful spirits. Sokhta fills the night with her silvery luminescence, and Hyperion, or Katanka-Sonnak, blazes forth in the distance. You can see the others, too, all floating within the dark reaches, each taking its place within the cosmic dance.

Now look a little farther out, where that crimson stain spreads across the dancers' path. That's it — the Red Star. We've been calling it Anthelios, though I understand other tribes have different names for it. The most common I've heard is the Eye of the Wym. See how it seems to pulsate and grow even as we watch? Whether it's growing or getting closer is hard to say. We don't even know for certain that it's actually a star. It could be a meteor, though it would have to be of enormous size. It might have no physical reality in the earthly realm at all. Mortal sky watchers have noticed nothing in that area of space, even with their most sophisticated telescopes. Perhaps you will be the first to travel to it and tell us what it is we face.

Go ahead, if you're so eager. Jump for it. You may even make it. But if you want to learn the tricks and pathlore you

## *A Word about Spirit Minions*

In several of the descriptions below, guardian spirits or realm guardians and sentinels are mentioned. Though their statistics are not given in the text here, most are generic Star-spirits. Those beings are detailed in the Appendix. Should they prove too strong or not strong enough for individual Storyteller's needs, feel free to change them.

need to traverse this mighty realm, you'd do well to curb your impatience and come with me to meet Bright Vision, your guide. She won't be taking you to the red star, but she can introduce you to those whom we believe influence our lives and in whose name we fight the Apocalypse.

If you think you're ready, we'll travel into the Aetherial Realm proper. For the first portion of the journey, you only need to follow me up above the clouds. I'm taking you to our spirit-orry. Bright Vision will take you the rest of the way from there. *I trust* I need not remind you that Bright Vision is a great prophet, and an elder even to respected guests such as yourself. She sees far more and with greater clarity than either you or I, so treat her with the respect due her. And if you have any sense at all, don't dwell on her blindness; as you well know, sight isn't everything.

For now, keep close and take my word for it that all you have to do is leap up above the clouds and run along their tops. Don't worry. You won't fall unless you deliberately throw yourself through a break in the clouds. Most of the laws that confine us in the physical world have no power here. Bright Vision will explain more.

Can you feel it as we climb through the clouds? Sort of tingling and cool? It's a little disconcerting to be able to pass right through them on the way up, bursting through them as though they're hardly there, then standing atop them and letting them support you. I've never felt anything else quite so insubstantial, yet with a wispy strength at the same time. And the smell — sort of a cross between new-mown grass and fresh rain. Sometimes, when storms pass through, it smells like ozone and vibrates with electricity. Take a taste as you pass through, too. When I was younger I expected them to taste like marshmallows — a foolish expectation, I know. The closest I can come to the taste of this realm is sparkling water, or those confections that melt away almost before you taste them on your tongue. Feel free to run along the tops of the clouds to get accustomed to moving here. Even though you're technically weightless, you can move normally by concentrating on what you're doing.

Do you see that tower rising above the clouds ahead? The gleam of its metal exterior against the dark background of the Aetherial vault, that's Sokhta's radiance reflected by the spirit-orry of the Sept of the Stars. You can see the moon bridges that pass nearby. Other moon bridges look like flashes of light in the distance. If we were close enough, we might be able to identify those using them.

## *Laws of the Realm*

There are a few notable rules particular to the Aetherial Realm that Storytellers will probably want to utilize. Briefly summarized, the constant rules are:

- Many tasks involving the stars or heavens are much easier to accomplish within the realm. These tasks—summoning Star-spirits, air or flame elementals, Lunes, and the like; astrology tests; Gifts that involve atmospheric or celestial objects; rolls involving moon bridges—have their difficulties reduced by two.
- The realm is a place of the Umbra, not of the physical world. Visitors can still breathe, don't suffer explosive decompression or any of the other side effects that real outer space would inflict, save weightlessness. Indeed, although Garou can fall from the Reaches and into the clouds, falling within the Aetherial Realm is never damaging.
- Due to the proximity of Phoebe/Sokhta, all Garou gain a Rage point upon entering the Aetherial Realm.

I see we are expected. You should feel honored. Do you see that Garou with the black coat sprinkled with battle scars like stars? That is Altair, our sept leader. I'll leave you in his care. May you find what you seek!

## *The Sept of the Stars*

Welcome to the Sept of the Stars. I am Altair. For centuries, we Stargazers have maintained a spirit-orrey here atop the Umbral clouds. Here we try to solve the puzzles presented by the heavens. We have spent much of our time exploring this realm and concluding alliances with various spirits who make their homes here. Come in. Usually, we require visitors to show us they understand themselves and creation by answering riddles. Those who cannot do so must undertake an Umbral quest in search of knowledge we do not already possess. There is no need for us to require such from you; you've proven yourselves already. When you travel to the domains of the Celestines, you may discover things we don't know, especially if you can find information about the Red Star, what its approach means and how we can combat it. It is for this reason we have agreed to provide a guide to teach you what we know of this realm, in the hope that we can mitigate what we foresee.

Please stay together and touch nothing—not even the walls. Each is a gateway to a different area within the orrey. Those who do not know the way can lose themselves in some remote section, perhaps even starve while trying to find the way out. I see that you are already somewhat disoriented due to the structure's eccentricities. Perhaps it may help if you think of it as a tesseract. Ceilings are not necessarily overhead, and the hall may become the wall when you pass through an opening to another space. Wait while I open the way, then follow me into the Celestial Chamber. I ask that you remain silent until we have left that room—it serves as a meditation

chamber. Perhaps when you return, you will have more time to see the orrey and meet with the rest of the sept.

As you can see, the positions of the stars in the Aetherial Realm are pictured here. That flash of light near the corner is a Star-spirit communing with our ranking Theurge, Sirius Darkstar. And there is your guide, Bright Vision. Once she was known as Andromeda Moon-Sister. When she lost her sight battling a Wyrn creature, we all thought she would declare herself unfit and ask to be led to a final battle where she might give her life fighting the minions of the great enemy. Instead, Gaia gifted her with a new sort of sight—that of a prophet sent to lead us and reveal the Wyrn's ploys as the Apocalypse rushes toward us. She also discovered that her naturally acute senses combined with the mental disciplines of her Kailindo provide her with a substitute for her lost eyesight.

Ah, she has heard me. There, she moves to meet you outside. We will withdraw as well. I do not wish to keep her waiting and I have other tasks that require my attention. Step through here and you will be outside again. May Sokhta smile upon your journey!

## *Bright Vision*

Altair moves quickly! I understand his haste, but before we undertake our journey, I wanted you to see that the cloudlands of the Aetherial Realm teem with life other than our own. Here above the clouds, the spirits of all flying beasts may be found. Many, such as the Bird-spirits, occupy aeries that rise in spirals and ledges farther and farther up, wrapping themselves around bits of cloud or around nothing at all. Air-spirits throng through the cloudtops, dancing and playing with anyone who will fly with them. All the totems concerned with the air keep domains, summer homes if you will, among the clouds. These include Pegasus, whose realm resembles cloud fields and rain lakes; Griffin, who prefers his mountain lair; Owl, whose realm contains colorful cloud trees and white fields; Falcon, who perches atop the highest cloud-wreathed cliffs and Wendigo, whose chill home within the icy farther reaches is thankfully far from here. If we had the time, we could visit their domains. Perhaps we may have time upon our return. Our own seekers already question the totems, however, hoping to find answers. Though the totems may know something, we still might accomplish more by attracting the attention of those who govern the far reaches of the realm and asking for their wisdom. They are closer to the Red Star; they see more of its light. Though they are all separate entities, with many governing their domains under totally different laws, all work together as a part of the whole.

Do you feel it? The pulsing of the stars and planets, all blending together into one slow rhythm like a heartbeat? If you allow yourself to feel it, that rhythm throbs through you with your own heart's movement, joining to it and adding its own singular pace to that of the stars. Shh! Now listen. Can you hear that faint sound? Like tiny bells, each chiming in its turn as if speaking its piece, then listening to the others—a cosmic dialogue. Each spirit adds its own unique



perspective to the whole. It is their voices you hear. And underneath it all, the slower, more resonant notes embody the commands and judgments of the Celestines.

You seem a little surprised. How can we hear across such vast distances? Because we listen with our spirits. And you're right. We aren't actually breathing, at least not in the same way we breathe in the physical realm. So how can we speak without air? Let me ask you this, then — what do you smell? All of us, naturally, but what else? The intense cleanness of this realm of the air? The biting crispness, almost like ozone, that proclaims the stars' and spirits' movements? Yes, you too can sense these things when you take the time. Don't bother asking how you can smell something that lies light years away from you in the earthly realm. Nor should you ask how we will travel to distant planets. You already know the answers; you need only listen to yourself.

Simply accept that here you need no food or air to survive. Nor must we don cumbersome space suits or worry about being crushed by heavy gravities or destroyed by vacuum. We may run free the way Gaia intended us to do. This time, I'll accompany you physically rather than using a Gift to visit the far reaches astrally. We'll travel by the routes I know best, but we may diverge from that path whenever we need to, especially if you think it may help us discover more about Anthelios.

The anti-sun. I can sense his presence as well; you can, too, yes? He brings with him a breath of foul air, a song filled with disharmony and an erratic movement that grates against the ordered dance of the realm's denizens. When I had my sight, I used to feel overwhelmed by the enormous distances, all the spirit aeries atop the cloud mountains and the Star-spirits who crowd the realm. Now, I feel my relationship to all within the Aetherial vault and count many of those spirits among my friends. Now there's a new coldness in the realm, a crushing presence I have no desire to know better. But you — you must learn more, and it falls to me to teach you what you will need to know. I am not ashamed to tell you that for the first time since I lost my sight, I fear to tread the Aetherial skies. Yet I must, for I know now that Gaia granted me this treasure, my other-sight, so that I could be your guide. I accept that duty. Let us begin, for it may take us many months to make this journey. May the Incarnae guard us from the Eye of the Wyrms as we walk the star roads to their distant domains.

## The Domains of the Incarnae

*I reach, hand stretching upward,  
questing, yearning. Lifting into  
the bright luminescence of their regard, I tread  
the blackness of far distances.*

*I seek the stars, the planets,  
that spangled, glittering company  
whose dance I long to join.*

— Canopus Skydancer, Galliard of the Sept of the Stars

As you may have already guessed, we'll be traveling the star roads, moon paths that stretch as far outward as the Membrane separating us from the Deep Umbra. Theoretically, it's possible to take any path and eventually reach the various celestial domains, but the way is shorter and the route less dangerous when you have a guide who knows the way. Be advised that time flows — unusually here. Although our speed is much greater than any rocket trying to reach the physical planets, some of these journeys will take weeks, even months to complete. Perhaps even years, although I hope not. I dread the thought that we may not finish our quest before we find the Red Star has arrived and made it obsolete. In any case, we must take this chance in the hope that we will be given the time we need. It is all we have.

As you know, the moon paths (and by extension the star roads) are not always reliable for traveling. We will have to take great chances, even traveling during the moon's waning if we are to make it to all the domains of the Incarnae — especially since we don't know how long we have to accomplish our task. We will not need to eat or drink anything on our journey, nor will we need to breathe or sleep as long as we are in the main portion of the Aetherial Realm. You must have already noticed that for all intents and purposes you are weightless here. You must concentrate to remain on the clouds or paths and not drift up off them and float aimlessly away.

Whenever we must step off the path, however, we become subject to the laws that govern the domain we tarry in. For that reason, we must be very careful that as we travel we keep track of Sokhta's phases. During moon-dark, even I cannot find the way, and we must be sure that the domain we choose to shelter in before continuing is friendly to us. Luckily, we have many pacts with the spirits of this realm. Contrary laws may also govern the domains of the Incarnae that we visit. You will have to adapt as best you can to each.

### Keeping to the Path

Storytellers who wish to simulate some of the travel through the Aetherial Realm may require players to expend their characters' Willpower in order to stay on the appointed path. This is to allow the characters to follow a basic route along a moon path. Difficulties beyond remaining on the path should be dealt with separately. Each time the characters set out on a new path or enter or leave an Incarna's realm, they should expend one point of Willpower to journey onward. This simulates the concentration it takes to follow a set route and to consciously keep from drifting off due to weightlessness. Of course, you should work several opportunities to regain Willpower into the story so you don't arbitrarily strand your pack without the will to continue.

## Sokhta

### *Incarna of Luna*

We'll begin our journey with she who acts as my tribe's patron, Sokhta, whom many call Phoebe. She is an Incarna of Luna — a part, but not the whole. Most visitors to the Aetherial Realm first note two things — the sun's brilliant but distant glow, and Sokhta's vibrant rays. Though I cannot see it, I sense her light filling half the Umbral sky. She is always present in the Aetherial sky and because she lies nearest, she appears much larger than the moon does from earth. Like the other Incarnae, here she is free to appear as her true self, and that self may have many forms. To the Stargazers she is the Lambent Lady. From her silvery light we construct moon bridges and moon paths to ease our travel.

We are fortunate to begin our journey during her full moon phase. Sokhta or Phoebe can appear either in human, cat or wolf form or as a sphere made of Moonsilver. She is said to be Luna's daughter, a being of less power than the Celestine herself. I don't think of the Incarnae as being separate beings from the Celestines, though. I believe, as do many of my tribemates, that the Incarnae are literally that: avatars, different facets or incarnations of the Celestines in forms our minds can grasp. By assuming such aspects, they also place some limits upon their powers so that we may interact with them without burning ourselves out or becoming insane. Whether this is true or not, I always act as though it is. That way, I give these potent beings the respect and adoration they deserve. I have never found that an Incarna objects to being called by the Celestine's name either. If they are different beings, I believe that the Incarnae exist to serve as the Celestines' physical forms and spokespersons and such an identification with the ruler is warranted anyway.

In any case, as long as you behave with respect for each of these entities and their domains, you should find it easier to traverse the Aetherial Realm. It also pays to remember that the Celestines are not limited to the Aetherial, but may reside in domains scattered throughout all the Umbral reaches. A Garou would be foolish to provoke the spirits under their care believing she would not meet justice elsewhere in the spirit domains.

For now, let us be thankful for Sokhta's luminous fullness. Though she is at her most warlike during this time, her roads are clearest and least dangerous. And while she herself seems ready to battle the Wyrms, she may provide us with either knowledge or some weapon we may use against Anthelios.

During other phases of the moon, Sokhta reveals other aspects of herself to us. During the new moon, she is the cryptic riddler, who can also be playful. At the crescent moon she often grants prophecies or awards those who win through to her realm with Gifts. While the half moon reigns supreme, she is a wise counselor, listening to visitors' travails and offering judgment or helping us reach an understanding of what we need to do, while the gibbous moon calls to her bardic facet.





During that time, she tells stories of times before and inspires our Galliards to compose glorious songs or teaches them the howls that will open the Moon Bridges as they become more obscure. Though she is counted among the signs most beneficent to our Theurges (due to her great knowledge and wisdom and the mysteries she engenders), and though she is the special patron of the Stargazers, Sokhta is one of the best-known of the Incarnae due to her influence over all Garou. She welcomes all the changing children to her court and turns away no one who truly needs her and is willing to undertake quests on her behalf.

By the time we reach her, however, she will be in another phase. We would do well to remember that the paths constantly change as we move throughout the realm.

...

Finally, we're here! It never ceases to amaze me that we become tired even though we carry no weight and labor under none of the usual physical laws that govern us on earth. We must be close! I feel the overpowering presence of her light as it grows and I hear the passage of Sokhta's servants as they streak toward us. Does the whole sky seem made of light, so bright your eyes cannot take it in? Do you see moonbeams rushing toward us? Those are Lunes, here to guard the approach to Sokhta. If no Stargazer accompanied you, the Lunes would ask you to turn back; do not feel insulted. Luna loves us all equally, yet does not grant audiences freely. Sokhta, however, has her favorites among tribes as do all the planetary Incarnae. Each of you in turn will be welcome.

The Lunes are faithful warders, but hardly hostile; at most, they would try to divert you onto a moon bridge back to the earthly realm. Since I am with you, we should have no trouble reaching Phoebe's chosen physical manifestation, that glowing orb of Moonsilver I feel just ahead. If we are fortunate, she may speak with us and even give us Gifts if we can make a convincing case of our need. Be prepared, though. Not all gifts are free.

First, as I'm certain you can already feel from the prickling caress of bathing in her light, Phoebe — is that name more comfortable to you? — has replenished our Gnosis. Merely being in such close proximity places us in a more spiritual frame of mind and saturates our bodies with Gnosis. Secondly, all Pathstones, which must be used to open Moon Bridges, come from her. She decides whether to grant a petitioner a Pathstone or not.

This sphere which we stand upon is composed entirely of Moonsilver. Although it usually inflicts terrible damage on Garou and our fellow Changing Children, here in the Aetherial Realm it does not burn us. Should Sokhta allow you to take some, it can be formed into weapons of great power and spiritual resonance. But if you accept the Moonsilver, you must sacrifice a little of your own spiritstuff so that Sokhta's generosity does not deplete her own supply. Fair is fair. Whether in return for a Pathstone or Moonsilver, she requires a quest from those who wish to receive her gifts; I understand she is fond of sending supplicants to recover lost Moonsilver or Pathstones rather than granting new

## *Sokhta as Totem*

### **Background Cost: 7**

The Incarna of Luna that reigns in the Aetherial Realm is sometimes known as Phoebe, sometimes as Sokhta. Both names please her equally, although the Stargazers are meticulous about referring to her as Sokhta. She will sometimes agree to watch over a pack as a Totem of Respect.

**Traits:** Phoebe's children receive Enigmas 3 and Primal-Urge 2; what's more, the Incarna will allow any pack member to use the Ragabash Gift: Open Moon Bridge.

**Ban:** Children of Phoebe/Sokhta are pledged to defend moon bridges and moon paths from the predations of the Wyrms.

ones and letting the old ones lie where they fell. Your quest against the Red Star may convince her of your need.

When I first met Sokhta, my eyes had not yet been lost to the Wyrms' poisons. Perhaps if you concentrate on my description, she will appear to you as well. This is as I remember her:

Sokhta is a lady tall and slender, with softly curling silver hair flowing to her feet, and a pallid, rounded face with palest silvery blue eyes deep set under feathery brows. Her gaze seems to speak of both open innocence and the most deeply guarded mysteries. Her raiment is luminous white with folds of soft dove gray and deepest shadow. It drapes about her like clouds on a full-mooned night. Her cloak of gray flows outward from her like moonbeams and in her hand she holds a silver goblet from which a luminescent mist arises.

Framed against the night sky, lit by her own radiance, she sits upon a dark gray throne with a silver back that is rounded and softly glowing. At her feet, a pool of moonlight reflects her lunar form, then flows outward along dozens of rivulets, each of which spreads across the sky, becoming moon paths and star roads. A sweet, guarded smile plays about her lips, yet by her side rests a silvered breastplate and spear. Whispers and the sound of myriad chiming bells echo through the chamber. A smell like the freshest ocean breeze after a violent storm wafts from her, bringing hope in its wake.

This is my remembrance of her. I hope yours will be as joyful.

## *The Moon Garden of Sokhta*

In the physical world the moon is a barren orb, but in the Aetherial Realm, Moonsilver serves as fruitful soil. Sokhta's garden creates a haven of life and growth where we may rest before continuing our journey. Though I can no longer see it, I remember its pale beauty. Surrounding a mirror bright pool, night-blooming flowers and silver-white hedges form an intricate maze. Pastel cosmos, moonflowers, white echinacea, satin flowers and evening primrose combine with plants that have no earthly counterparts. They shimmer softly, glowing and twinkling like miniature stars in Sokhta's own light.

## *Dangers of the Realm*

Even though the Incarnae control their domains, the nature of the Aetherial Realm creates pockets of otherness that correspond to celestial phenomena in the physical realm. Some of these can present dangers to travelers. In each section a sidebar details a few of these so that Storytellers can incorporate them into Aetherial adventures if they so desire.

### • Dark Roads

When the new moon phase dominates, moon paths become less stable and harder to read. During that time, it is possible for travelers to stumble onto Dark Roads in the mistaken belief they have found a functional moon path. Dark Roads seem to lead in directions the traveler wishes to go, but soon diverge and enter dangerous territories inhabited by Banes or worse. Once it becomes clear to the traveler that the path is not right, the path disappears behind her. She must remain on the forward path or lose herself within the Aetherial vault with no guarantee that she will find her way back to any domain she recognizes. Further, once on the path, whatever twisted denizen awaits the traveler is alerted to her presence and may seek her out. Nobody is sure why Dark Roads form—they may be the influence of the Wyrms moving in the shadows between the stars, or they might be tests for the questing Garou. Their true nature baffles even the sagest Stargazer.

Their sweet, heady scents perfume the air. Sokhta's throne rests in the center of the garden alongside the Moonsilver pool where pallid swans drift lazily among the translucent waterlilies. The whole garden echoes to the calls of night birds. It is said that the trails through the garden are constructed from linked Pathstones. When the Lambent Lady allows a worthy recipient to take a Pathstone, she dips her hand into the pool and creates another to take its place.

In her more martial phases, I have heard that the labyrinth becomes a testing ground for Garou who seek her favor, with hidden obstacles and spirit foes to test their resolve. Those who win through to the center attain Phoebe's special favor. This may be in the form of a Pathstone or some advantage granted them the next time they enter battle.

For now, I leave you to meet with Sokhta and make known your requests. I shall walk awhile in the garden and partake of its sounds and aromas. When you are ready to continue your journey, call for me and I will come.

## *Katanka-Sonnak*

### *Incarna of Helios*

From here we travel onward toward the farther reaches of the realm. We journey now to the realm of Hyperion, whom the Wendigo call Katanka-Sonnak, an Incarna of

Helios. Though not the closest to us, we acknowledge the Wind Rider's power to illuminate the darkness. Humans consider the sun our most important celestial body. They have even adopted some of our words to express the loss of the sun during an eclipse. Not understanding the full import of the terms they use, they nonetheless call the area of the earth in which the sun is in total eclipse the umbra (or shadow), while those at more of an angle are known as the penumbra (or outer shadow). My belief is that they learned of the terms from the Corax, who claim a special relationship with Helios — and *do* tend to gossip.

It is many days' travel to reach Katanka-Sonnak's domain and we will have to stop along the way — probably several times — in minor domains of Aetherial spirits. We may well need to allow the moon paths to reconstitute themselves during the dark of the moon. We will travel as far as we can so long as the paths exist at all, however.

Even this far away, I can feel his heat. As we come nearer, I will even be able to perceive his brilliant light, the only thing that can illumine the darkness I see. Like Sokhta, Katanka-Sonnak has many forms and many names. One of his forms, the one we now approach, is the Aetherial sun, which appears in its true white color here in the Aetherial Realm. He may also appear as a human warrior clad in bright armor, a golden eagle, a huge raven or a diamond-bright crocodile.

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I despair of telling the time here in Hyperion's presence, where there is no difference between night and day. Everything — even shadow — is lost in his glowing white radiance. Have you any conception of how long we've been traveling? I suppose it only matters that we move quickly enough to have a chance of defeating the threat of the Red Star.

Do you feel the emanations of his mighty presence? We have left Sokhta's gentler realm behind and fully entered into Katanka-Sonnak's domain. You must ready yourselves, as must I, to face him. Prepare to be tested. The Wind Rider is not inclined to treat most Garou kindly — he blames us for the harm done to his children in the War of Rage. I have heard from others that he also believes we Garou have helped bring on the coming Apocalypse. Among the Garou, only the Children of Gaia and the Wendigo truly hold his favor.

Are we close enough yet that his light has dimmed all others? Do you feel his servants nearing us? I smell them — an acrid odor like molten metal — and I hear them hissing toward us at speeds we can only imagine. They are beings of elemental fire, who dance around their lord and guard the approaches to his realm. Soon we will feel their kiss as they test our resolve. You must be fearless and hardy. Go on even when you think you will be burned alive from the heat. Only then will we be granted audience. Just remember that these too are Katanka-Sonnak's children; he would not appreciate them being harmed.

We've made it through. I always fear entering this domain and the pain we must suffer to do so. There are other dangers to be found within Hyperion's realm as well, though we hope not to fall prey to them. Now that we're here,





### *Katanka-Sonnak's Fire*

Fire elementals form a ring around the sun's realm. Garou wishing to approach the Wind Rider are attacked as they near him. One elemental attacks for each Garou present. Those who try to pass through the ring must suffer five attacks to break through. Each attack strikes with an attack dice pool of six dice, and inflicts three health levels of aggravated damage from intense heat and seems to set the Garou alight. The damage can be soaked, though the difficulty to do so is 9. Children of Gaia and Wendigo Garou suffer one less attack from the fire elementals and are at difficulty 8 to soak the damage. Certain Gifts, such as Luna's Armor and Chill of Early Frost, can prevent or mitigate the damage. For each wound a Garou receives in this manner, she regains a Willpower point.

If any Garou suffers enough damage that she dies, her body is engulfed in flame and disappears from view. This death can be real or illusory, at the Storyteller's discretion; certainly it depends on the character, and whether she has lived a life the Incarna would approve of. If the Storyteller chooses life, the character can be encountered again within Hyperion's citadel, restored to life and fully healed. Either the damage sustained by all the Garou is imaginary and disappears once they reach the citadel, or Katanka-Sonnak has healed the fallen Garou so that she may continue her life and complete a quest for the Incarna.

Wise Garou will realize that their objective is to reach Katanka-Sonnak's domain, not battle elementals. If they pass through without retaliating, there are no more attacks on them and they can reach the Incarna's citadel with no further trouble. Those who insist on battling the elementals must suffer through all five attacks as normal, but for every attack they attempt upon the elementals, they become subject to another attack (against which the soak difficulty rises to 10). These wounds also cause the Garou to lose a point of Willpower per attack.

however, we have a chance to meet with Katanka-Sonnak. Like any Ahroun, he is fierce and proud. Although he does not care for most Garou, if you treat him with respect, remain brave and speak with him honestly, he will respect you in turn. He may even choose to heal the wounds we received on our way here.

Our quest against the Red Star may be enough to appease him. Some of our seers tell us the star is called Anthelios because it directly opposes Helios himself — another sun, but a darkened, corrupted one. Hyperion should have a vested interest in assisting us to keep an interloper from usurping his position. Still, it would be best not to depend on his good will based on your good intentions. He can want more than you can give.

Katanka-Sonnak can heal any sort of damage to himself or any other; he is equally capable of inflicting damage that can be healed only through mystical means. Among the Silent Striders, rumors whisper that Katanka-Sonnak restores life to the dead. I have never asked whether they mean that he literally raises the dead or whether they believe it is his influence that allows Garou to live on as Ancestor-spirits. It's all tied up in occultism I don't feel qualified to explain. Still, he sometimes grants other, less questionable gifts to those deserving of them.

If you can convince him that your mission is both important and just, that it serves both his and Gaia's interests, he may gift you with Sunfire. Though his gift requires that you suffer the pain his fiery touch brings, it can burn out disease and poison and heal even severe wounds. His other gifts are less painful, though still potent.

The one time I met Katanka-Sonnak before this, I accompanied a Wendigo. The Incarna appeared as a great Native American warrior with deep bronze-red skin and long, flowing black hair. He dressed in creamy buckskins with beautiful yellow, red and blue beadwork depicting the sun disc and an elaborate headdress of eagle feathers and ermine. In his right hand, he held a feathered spear painted red and upon his back he carried a quiver of flaming arrows and a fire-strung bow. He rode upon a war pony as black as night with mane and tail of orange-red flames.

His eyes reflect the stars within the Aetherial Realm and burn with his inner strength. His face is harsh, but fair — like his judgments. His voice can be as soft as a sunbeam falling upon a single blade of grass or may reverberate throughout his realm, carrying his commands to all who serve him.

If he is different this time, I ask that you describe him to me so that I may know what form he chooses to take in these desperate times. We go now to his citadel, where we will shelter for a time before moving onward to another domain.

## *Citadel of Hyperion*

I don't know what you see, but I've seen the citadel in two different configurations before I lost my sight. The first

### *Hyperion as Totem*

**Background Cost:** 10

Just as Luna's face of Sokhta/Phoebe will sometimes act as a pack totem, so does Helios' Incarna of Katanka-Sonnak. He does so very rarely, and only when thoroughly impressed with a pack's mettle and foresight. Mokolé and Corax, the other children of Helios, respect Hyperion's children and will cooperate with them as necessary.

**Traits:** Each one of Hyperion's children receives the Gift: Kiss of Helios. The pack may also call on an additional five Willpower points per story.

**Ban:** Children of Hyperion/Katanka-Sonnak must protect the other shapeshifters left on earth, particularly the Mokolé and Corax.

## *Dangers of the Realm of Fire*

Some Storytellers may wish to incorporate a few more obstacles into their stories of travel in the Aetherial Realms. The following dangers exist within the sun's fiery domain:

### • **Sunspots**

In the physical world, sunspots are areas where the gaseous matter which comprises the sun burns less hotly. They appear darker than the surrounding area. Various phenomena are associated with sunspot activity. In the Aetherial Realm, sunspots cause Aetherial storms. Such storms are what make the solar winds dangerous. While usually more predictable, often coming in groups, then fading away for a time, sunspots (and the wild storms they cause) have become more frequent since the advent of the Red Star. As the ominous interloper comes nearer, sunspot activity increases until solar storms are almost constantly raging, mirroring the Incarna's anger.

At present, the sunspots, while prevalent, are not inescapable. If one occurs, it presages a howling storm with hurricane intensity solar winds. Such winds rip travelers from moon bridges and paths, hurling them to random locations within the Umbra and inflicting seven health levels of aggravated damage (soakable by Garou as usual) on those caught within their fury. The characters may end up in a random Umbral realm such as Atrocity, or perhaps even elsewhere in the Aetherial. For more information on these realms, consult *Umbra: the Velvet Shadow*.

### • **Solar Flares**

These towering columns of flame erupt over an area encompassing several hundred feet to a few miles. Miles-high geysers of flame, solar flares cannot harm characters by their fires — but the blast from the eruption and the radiation spewed forth by it are another story. The energy of the eruption is enough to throw the characters completely off the sun. In the physical world, a solar flare explosion is equivalent to ten times the force of the Hiroshima bomb. In the Aetherial, a flare's force is enough to cause eight levels of non-aggravated damage. While the damage can be soaked, the difficulty to do so is 8. Further, the radiation causes strange afflictions. Though temporary, these range from annoying to dangerous. The effects should last from a few hours to a few days. Storytellers should decide the duration, based on the story's needs and whether Gifts like Mother's Touch or healing from items like Sunfire seem appropriate for healing the effects. A few ideas for afflictions are given below.

- Partial paralysis of arms or legs (-3 to Dexterity)
- Deafness (-2 to Perception)
- Blindness (-3 to Perception)
- Severe nausea and vertigo (-3 to all tasks)
- Uncontrolled narcolepsy (roll Stamina versus difficulty 9 whenever determined by Storyteller or fall heavily asleep for ten minutes)



is a pure white tipi decorated with symbols of the sun and flames in brilliant yellow, orange and red. It rests upon a plain of glowing embers, bathed in blue-white fire. Inside, there exists a great council chamber around a central fire. Beautifully designed peace pipes and speaking sticks adorn the walls, which are lined with furs and raven feathers. Each fur pulls back to reveal other chambers, each resembling a separate tipi. Guests visiting Katanka-Sonnak's realm are welcome to stay in some of the areas set aside for them. Aetherial spirits come to the Incarna for judgments and counsel. Perhaps some will be here now with news of the Red Star; the Incarna may hold a council of war. If he does so, make certain that you speak only when given the speaking stick or you may anger him.

The other form consists of an actual citadel, a walled city with spires and turrets, made of flickering flames and set within a lake of burning fire. Like the tipi, there is a central chamber, though it resembles a medieval throne room. Tapestries of living fire adorn the walls and pools of lava light the hall. Katanka-Sonnak rests upon a crimson ruby throne lit from within by its inner fire. When the Incarna is not present, the throne remains dark and the whole room seems to lose its luster. Golden doorways lead to other halls and rooms.

In either form, you can feel the heat bathing us, but it doesn't burn or harm us as Katanka-Sonnak has granted us the right to be here. Sweet smells, as of burning incense, waft through his citadel and the sound of crackling flames fills the air. If you listen carefully to the flames, you can hear the voice of the Incarna.

After making our petition to Hyperion, we shall follow the star roads on to the next nearest realm (unless, of course, the Wind Rider sees fit to assist us with a ride on the solar winds). Once we leave the Wind Rider's realm, we travel to the domain of Mitanu, which corresponds to the planet Mercury.

## **Mitanu**

### ***Incarna of Mercury***

If we were not approaching Mitanu from Katanka-Sonnak's realm, it would be almost impossible for you to see. The Clever Rogue corresponds to Mercury, the second smallest planet and closest to the sun. From Earth, even astronomers have trouble seeing it in the sky. Luckily, here in the Aetherial, we're moving outward from the sun's realm. You aren't blinded by Katanka-Sonnak's overwhelming brilliance, and I can feel Mitanu's presence ahead of us.

Getting there is a little more complex than the paths we've followed thus far. We're riding the solar wind outward from Katanka-Sonnak. Rather than flowing in a straight line with it, we're following a slight curve. Trust me, I know it seems to make no sense, but we'll get there sooner this way — at least, if nothing causes a storm that tosses us somewhere else in the Umbra. Riding the winds always feels odd to me. I keep expecting to feel actual air movement pushing me along, but it's more like a stream and our movements

keeping us within that stream are more like swimming than flying. There's a scent that accompanies the wind when it's calm, almost like sun-warmed oranges or the way I believe the color yellow might taste.

Some of my septmates dismiss Mitanu as an untrustworthy trickster — he is associated with Ragabash and specially favors the Bone Gnawers. Certainly he's small, quick and difficult to find if he wishes to remain hidden. He does not possess the honesty of Katanka-Sonnak or the caring nature of Sokhta, but his strengths make him the consummate thief or spy. Rapid change is his meat and drink, and it gives him a wonderful gift for unconventional methods of handling difficulties. Perhaps that is why he is particularly fond of the Bone Gnawers, who must often make do with less than other Garou.

Do you sense the denizens of Mitanu's realm? They move so quickly, you probably can't see them. I never could, but I've learned to feel their presence. I hope you weren't carrying anything too exotic, or anything you wouldn't want to lose. These quicksilver spirits are extremely curious and apt to take whatever interests them. Sometimes, they'll return it when they're through with it, or if you request it of Mitanu. Of course, any Bone Gnawer will tell you that you can't get something for nothing....

Remember when you deal with Mitanu that he represents agility and quickness in all its forms — speed of wit as well as speed of foot. That agility expands to include his appearance, or at least, it did the last time I visited. He took many forms while we were in his realm, but he first greeted us as a creature similar to a ferret, not revealing himself as master of the realm at all until much later. In point of fact, he never did claim to be the Incarna, but his sense of humor and changeable nature became unmistakable regardless of his outward form. Most frequently, he chose to be a roguishly handsome man of medium height with a trim waist, long legs, thin supple fingers and dark auburn hair. I don't recall the color of his clothes; they seemed to change at his whim, but I do remember they flowed with him as he moved. Other favored forms, I understand, include a lean gray wolf and a small bird of prey.

Rather than actually holding court as some of the other Incarna do, Mitanu prefers more informal meetings. He may propose contests that feature racing or displays of wit. Most often, he asks visitors to undertake some sort of quest or challenge — often something that they can only accomplish through their wits. Occasionally he requests visiting Garou to perform a theft for him, recovering something stolen from a sept under his protection, rescuing a prisoner or taking an item from his enemies. He rewards the winners of contests and those who perform services for him with Gifts and treasures he has collected. Of course, such lucky winners may later find they are missing some other item they had with them at the time of the contest.

Mitanu's realm seems very like the planet Mercury in the physical realm. It is quite small and dense, and has only the thinnest atmosphere. Of course, that doesn't bother us — we need not breathe or move in the normal fashion — but it does create a weird landscape of deep basins, high escarp-



ments and folded ripples across the surface. It looks quite forbidding, if I remember correctly, with brown and ash gray predominating. It seems so barren and unwelcoming that most travelers pass it by (when they can find it at all). Naturally, Mitanu wants to be unnoticed, overlooked and dismissed as unimportant. How else could he hide what he's really up to?

In reality, once we penetrate the small layer of atmosphere there is, we realize that the coloration and apparent landscape is in the air, as if painted on scrim. Beneath it, Mitanu has created a jewel-bright world made up of equal parts comfort and challenge. Azure lakes grace emerald green meadows flanked by tall, tree-covered mountains. Abutting this Edenic landscape lies a horrid desert of baked stone, raw wind-swept peaks and ashen pits miles deep. When last I visited, Mitanu moved from one landscape to another as whim took him. To find the Rogue, we will undoubtedly have to experience both (and possibly others he has adopted) before he allows himself to be found. Wherever he decides to reside, his manor appears, its presence betrayed only by Mercury's Path.

### *Mitanu's Manor*

Visitors to Mitanu's domain may wander through paradisiacal or hellish vistas until the Incarna decides to acknowledge their presence. We must hope he finds us interesting enough to approach us sooner rather than later. You must take over now and act as my guides, for I can't help you discover Mitanu's manor. It can only be found by locating Mercury's Path and walking it to the end. It may appear as a rural lane winding among hills, a set of tracks leading over a sea of dunes, a leaf-strewn path in the woodlands, a stream bedecked with stepping stones or even a passage leading from branch to branch among the trees. To follow the path successfully calls for us to use our minds to do so and to outwit Mitanu's minions, who try to discourage us or hide the way from us.

The manor itself may be a tree house or a palace. I have heard that it has been a circus tent, a pagoda, an domed arena and even an underground bunker at times. Though it is always hidden until you reach the end of the path, the manor boasts several colors and textures; you see, it is created from various odds and ends Mitanu has collected or had brought to him by questing visitors. The whole structure is made of "borrowed" or "acquired" items. It's a chaotic jumble that looks like nothing so much as a collection of rags, toys, pieces of driftwood, garbage cans, jewelry, clothing, stones, grass clippings and wax crayons. I'm sure there are plenty of other components, each as eccentric as the last. If you can imagine all these strange items cobbled together into something like an architectural structure — well, soon you'll see for yourself. It's the quintessential "stuff" pile every Bone Gnawer dreams about. Of course, he could have changed



## Mitanu as Totem

### Background Cost: 7

Mitanu, like most other planetary Incarnae, isn't above acting as patron to a pack. However, he doesn't act as totem to any pack without a Bone Gnawer, Ragabash or someone born under his sign — such a pack is obviously a humorless lot.

**Traits:** Mitanu's children are masters of improvisation. They gain three dice to both Subterfuge and Streetwise rolls, and learn the Gift: Blur of the Milky Eye. What's more, any Ragabash Gift costs one less experience point to learn for one of Mitanu's chosen.

**Ban:** Mitanu expects his children to fend for themselves by finding appropriate tools for any task as they go along. He disapproves of overreliance on any one item, and forbids his packs to carry any particular fetish or weapon for more than a month. Talens are exempt from this rule.

everything since the last time I was here and be living in a split-level ranch style with vinyl siding for all I know. I wouldn't be surprised at anything Mitanu presents to us so long as he finds some amusement in it.

Whatever the reality of his manor, part of his domain is as barren as it appears. I know this because of the Mercurial Powder he occasionally shares with those who excel in his contests and challenges. The Bone Gnawer who told me of it said that it increased his natural mental abilities, but I have not received any of the powder, so I don't know the truth of his claim. I have heard that Mitanu also occasionally teaches worthy candidates a Gift, which helps its recipient become better able to commit acts of thievery. While that may sound somewhat dishonorable to many Garou, I suppose we should remember that we can't all be Ahroun. If it didn't serve Gaia's purposes, he wouldn't teach it to us.

Let us prepare for an interesting adventure as we seek to find Mitanu. May our sense of humor be equal to his challenges!

## Hakahe Incarna of Vulcan

From the realm of Mitanu, we now move onward to the realm of his opposite. Some might question whether the two were twins because of their alignment in the heavens. If Mitanu and Hakahe are twins, however, their mirror images are inverted, for they are nothing alike. The confusion arises because the planet Vulcan inhabits the same space and orbital path as Mercury, but on the opposite side of the sun. It is a dark planet, hiding its fiery interior under a mantle of ebony, making it even more difficult to see than its orbital twin. Some astronomers in the earthly realm have theorized that Vulcan exists, but have yet to prove it. Many claim that what some people occasionally

## Dangers of the Realm

Although much of what Garou see as they approach Mitanu's domain is illusory, that picture exists for real in at least part of his realm. Gray ash pits cover a portion of his holdings and can be extremely dangerous. For one thing, they are sometimes several miles deep and anyone falling in gets sucked down and suffocated as if he had fallen into quicksand. Though this sounds strange since characters seem weightless and need not breathe in most of the Aetherial Realm, it is the result of an Incarna's local law superseding the general laws of the Aetherial. Ash pits are not always obvious. Something that appears to be firm ground, even a grassy sedge, may be a thin covering over one of the pits. Those who do not check their footing as they travel through the realm stand a good chance of tumbling into one of the pits (roll Perception + Enigmas, difficulty 9 to casually spot a pit).

Sometimes, as one is lost in the ashes, she experiences a sort of dream challenge that she must defeat. If she can do so, the Garou finds that she is able to stay afloat in the ash long enough to reach firmer footing. This is a test Mitanu puts some Garou through to determine their mental and physical fitness. (Storytellers are encouraged to devise dreamlike scenarios built around whatever quest the characters currently follow. The tests should be things that the characters can overcome either with cleverness or dexterous actions rather than combat or the use of Gifts.) If Mitanu wishes to test certain candidates, they have no chance to avoid stepping into the pit regardless of rolls to avoid it. Those who win through receive a gift of Mitanu's Mercurial Powder and realize that the ash they struggled through forms the basis for it. Needless to say, those Garou who prove unfit do not emerge from the pit and their powdered bones become part of the ashen hazard.

see as Mercury is in fact Vulcan appearing while its twin still travels on the opposite side of the sun.

Because Hakahe is even more difficult to locate than Mitanu, we must first find the correct star road to his domain. It has been said by some that to find Hakahe's realm you must stop looking for it and instead concentrate on looking within yourself. Since Hakahe is the Incarna associated with both the Uktena and with the auspice of Theurge, I guess this isn't too surprising. I remember looking for the realm when I traveled this way before and failing to see it. I suppose you see nothing but blackness ahead of us either? Good. That's what I recall. Open yourself up to feel the Incarna's emanations. It's quite subtle, like banked embers. Do you see a ribbon of dark fire stretching before us now? We must walk that road if we wish to enter Hakahe's domain. If you don't want to go, you may wait here and none will blame you. To walk the road of embers into Hakahe's heart takes a great deal of courage, and not the kind of bravery you need in battle. By the time you reach Hakahe, you will know yourself for all that you are —

## The Road of Embers

Walking the road of embers should be an exercise in baring each character's soul, exposing her weaknesses and calling to mind any fears she may have or failures she has endured. Storytellers may need to prepare more thoroughly to run this journey than any other within the Aetherial Realm. It also requires that players be willing to experience some intense roleplaying. Simply rolling Intelligence + Enigmas isn't the way to go with this scene; it should be emotional and difficult for the characters or there's no point in including it at all. That said, what *should* the Storyteller be doing?

Almost all characters have merits and flaws (and by this, we don't exclusively mean Merits and Flaws), usually ones that are not revealed to other characters or that they try to keep hidden. The Storyteller must try to work up scenarios designed to reveal and exploit each character's flaws (or at least one big flaw each). Perhaps the character holds a particular prejudice against something. She should have to confront whatever that is and either overcome her prejudice or fail to achieve a desired goal because she can't work through the flaw. Storytellers might require characters to give up some particularly cherished item — a grand klaive or other important fetish, for example — in order to continue their journey. Players often become quite upset when their characters' special possessions are taken away. Don't feel that you have to keep the item; the Incarna certainly doesn't need it, and the point is to test their reactions, not deprive the characters of things they've earned in other stories.

Other portions of the trek might include scenes from past stories where the characters either failed to achieve their objective or suffered some sort of loss along the way. Instances in which the characters were particularly obtuse, uncaring of others or not very honorable serve nicely. Finally, the Storyteller may wish to include a dreamlike occurrence in which the characters just can't seem to win. Whatever they do that seems to be the right thing turns out disastrously instead; some might even die in this encounter (they don't really die, after all, it's a dream!). If the Storyteller can foreshadow encounters planned for later, all the better. In essence, the point is to shake the characters up and make them face their greatest enemy — themselves and their failings. Before actually coming into Hakahe's presence, each character should also be required to reveal to the Incarna (and incidentally to every other character) one of his flaws. Only then is he ready to meet the potter whose hands shape the Garou's innermost soul.

and all you fail to be. It is a journey of the self, for Hakahe is the maker and the destroyer in one.

Can you see it yet? You should perceive a black globe, just visible in the sky because of the myriad tiny cracks that glow red with its internal fires. As we get closer, you can see that some





of those cracks are actually volcanoes spewing lines of orange-red lava down their sides. The rest of the planet dully reflects those fires in its obsidian black and presents a forbidding forest of razor-sharp spikes and pinnacles and a few navigable basins. Can you feel the heat? Do you smell the sulfurous air? It all comes together in a central basin of fire surrounded by jagged peaks. That's where we'll find Hakahe. Please be my eyes as we approach the Incarna; I cannot tell where the serrated basalt lies and it will inflict great pain if we allow it to cut us.

If you are not Uktena or if you have not been gifted with Hakahe's lore, you probably think of Vulcan as the smith of the gods. As Hakahe, however, this Incarna embodies Native American lore. Rather than a smith, Hakahe is a potter. The Uktena say he takes the animating spark and works it, molding it into the shape it needs to be and curing it in his kiln. The result is the secret soul of the Garou, which Hakahe then gives to Gaia to place within the shell she finds most compatible. Because Hakahe fashions the most hidden part of a Garou, he knows many secrets, which he may tell to those worthy of the knowledge. For this, the Uktena call him the Ebon Whisperer.

When I met Hakahe, he appeared as a tall dark-skinned Navajo with long, silky black hair, eyes of deepest black with

flames at their centers, and strong, competent looking hands. He dressed in attire reminiscent of flames, with dark leather serving as a background for painted streaks of red fire and depictions of jagged mountains. He carried with him a peace pipe made of painted clay. Wafting from the pipe, redolent herbal smoke scented the air and wreathed around the Incarna, making it seem as if he somehow remained partially hidden even while in plain sight. Surrounding the Incarna were several tiny painted clay figures much like kachina dolls — the spirits of his realm. Wherever he walked, the shattered land spread outward into patterns like sand paintings.

Those who please the Ebon Whisperer are invited to sample the smoke of his pipe. It is said that anyone looking into the bowl of the pipe sees the answer to an enigma that has plagued him or suddenly understands one of the great mysteries of the universe. I'm told that such knowledge comes at a price, however, and the Incarna may demand something in return, a quest on his behalf, the answer to another mystery or knowledge from the earthly realm he might not know. He has been known to teach Gifts to Garou whom he favors. I know of one called Shadow of the Ebon Whisperer, and he occasionally gives travelers some of the embers from his kiln. I have heard

### *Dangers of the Realm*

There are two main dangers in Hakahe's domain: his kiln and the black embers left over from his work. Strangely, each can be useful in minuscule amounts, but in greater amounts prove fatal to anyone coming into contact with them. While some players might believe they can solve problems by hopping to Hakahe's realm and throwing whatever bothers them into one or the other substance, it isn't that easy. Unwilling creatures cannot be forced into the basin or refuse pit except by the Incarna himself, and he is loath to do such things even to Wyrms-creatures. (Needless to say, those who think they can somehow lasso the Red Star and steer it into emberblack just aren't thinking straight.) While both kilnflame and emberblack can be removed from the domain in small amounts (with the Incarna's permission), they become subtly different when removed from his immediate influence (see *Vulcan's Embers* in Chapter Five). Garou who ignore Hakahe's warnings get what they deserve should they venture into this forbidden territory.

#### • Kilnflame

The fires that fuel Hakahe's kiln are dangerous to visitors. Although not as hot as the sun's fire, kilnflame is a force of pure creation. The problem arises when something that is already living or some item that is already in existence encounters kilnflame. When exposed to something already living, the flames attempt to create it anew, resulting in weird (and sometimes horribly mutated) beings. Applied to objects, kilnflame causes their dissolution and reassembly into something new. Such things may be beautiful or terrible, but are never the same as before; nor do they possess any powers they might have held (if the item in question is a fetish or similar object). Garou attempting to negotiate the basin

against Hakahe's orders find that both the pools of lava and the ember bridges are of kilnflame. Storytellers may exercise their own judgment in assigning mutations, but in general, less than one out of ten such changes will be beneficial to the creature so changed (such as gaining wings or becoming impervious to silver).

Any beneficial mutation should be matched by some corresponding penalty. For example, should a Garou become immune to damage from silver, she might find that she instead has developed an allergy that causes aggravated damage from some other, more common item or substance such as steel. The mutation should cause problems for the Garou, but not so change her that she is no longer one of Gaia's chosen; she's simply developed a problem that handicaps her. If characters encounter kilnflame, they should each roll one die. The lower the number rolled, the greater and more severe the mutation (or the more mutations she receives). Beneficial powers can only be gained if a ten is rolled.

#### • Emberblack

The refuse from Hakahe's kiln is called emberblack. Still hot, these smoldering coals are black on the outside with a spark of flame at the center. Unlike the kilnflame from which it is derived, emberblack cannot create anything, but it does destroy. Any object placed within emberblack melts into slag and eventually dissipates altogether. Living beings literally fall to pieces, in essence becoming uncreated. Foolish Garou who perish in such fashion cannot return to Gaia, nor does the Incarna use any of their essence to create a new soul for Gaia's use.

## *Hakahe as Totem*

### **Background Cost: 7**

It's very rare for Hakahe to serve as a pack totem, and even rarer for him to patronize a pack without at least one Uktena among them. Nonetheless, the Ebon Whisperer will once in a great while lend his favor to a pack that seeks him out and beseeches his guidance.

**Traits:** Hakahe grants his packs an additional three dice on Crafts and Repair rolls, and teaches his children the Gift: Reshape Object. All Occult rolls made by pack members are at -2 difficulty.

**Ban:** Children of Hakahe must work to build things of importance among human communities, the better to teach humans to build rather than destroy.

that such embers contain within them the powers of creation and destruction and are entrusted to only the most worthy.

## *Hakahe's Kiln*

Located beneath the largest volcanic peak of the realm lies a basin of fire known as Hakahe's Kiln, or sometimes Vulcan's Forge. It is said that this is the place where Hakahe does his work, shaping the malleable souls of the Garou and testing them in the bright fires of creation and destruction. Ribbons of fiery lava snake down from the volcano to the basin, forming pools of molten fire with bridges of glowing embers between them. When last I visited, we met the Incarna on a ledge overlooking the basin. He warned us against going into the kiln. Further, he spoke against our approaching the area just below the kiln as well.

Falling downward from the basin like a waterfall lies an area where the refuse from the kiln collects. This is the place Hakahe told us not to go. Within that dark canyon, spent embers still glow, though with a reddish black flickering that seems to enhance the darkness rather than providing even the dimmest light. I do not know what dangers aside from burning or perhaps poisonous gasses these areas pose for us, but it is enough for me that Hakahe has asked us to avoid them. There are other places where we may rest before continuing our journey.

Once again, we will ride the winds away from Hakahe's realm and move further outward toward the domain of the Veiled Mother.

## *Tambiyah Incarna of Venus*

We are approaching the realm of Tambiyah, whom many call the Veiled Mother. Even from here, you may be able to discern the swirled golden colors that give it such a glow. From Earth, Venus is the brightest planet visible and is sometimes called the evening star. Most people used to believe that Venus was a rich, jungle-covered planet because of the golden clouds that cover it. Aetherial denizens

have known for far longer that those clouds are actually poisonous and acidic when the Incarna wishes them to be so. Further, the atmosphere is so thick it traps heat in, making it the hottest planet except for Vulcan. We will not be bothered by these difficulties if the Veiled Mother allows us to enter her domain.

Do you hear those crystalline notes ringing through the air? Those are Tambiyah's handmaidens, the spirits who attend her and warn her of the approach of strangers to her realm. They will not try to harm us unless commanded to do so by the Incarna, but they provide her with information about those who come into the domain, so be on your best behavior. We may be stopped and questioned before entering the clouds and we may have to prove ourselves before Tambiyah consents to see us.

Tambiyah particularly favors the Black Furies and Galliards; in fact, she preferred speaking with those Garou over others the last time I visited. She may even wish a Galliard to compose a song or poem in her honor! Some Garou are surprised that the Furies do not refer to her as Aphrodite, but of course Tambiyah and Aphrodite are merely facets of a whole. They do sometimes call her the Star Maiden, but more often refer to her as the Veiled Mother. She, like the Furies, is deeply concerned with the welfare of women and children. She is not so welcoming to males, especially if they have ill-used any females or hold themselves above women as superior. For this reason, she is on less than good terms with Nerigal, the Ice Warrior and she can make things difficult for Get of Fenris — especially Ahrouns — who enter her domain. She isn't unfair, however, and allows access to those with good intentions. That doesn't mean she doesn't snub them some, however. If you wish to get along with Tambiyah, you must ignore any slights from her and prove your honor and trustworthiness. Still, there is far more to Tambiyah than her battle-sister persona. She is also warm and loving, motherly and wise with a great lust for life she lavishes upon her domain and those within it.

In the earthly realm, Venus is dry, mostly flat and orange. It rotates in the opposite direction from most other planets, so if you could see the sun from the surface it would rise in the west and set in the east. Here in the Aetherial Realm, Tambiyah still spins backward (which astronomers call retrograde), but she is not so unwelcoming. Here, once we have penetrated the mother's outer veils, she bequeaths to us an intoxicating, vibrant world of luxurious growth that rivals the greatest myths of primeval jungles, savannas and oceans. Of all the realms I have visited, I think I will most miss not being able to see Tambiyah's domain again. It reminds me what Gaia must have once provided for us on Earth.

Well, we are here. At least I may revel in the sounds, scents and feel. Do you hear all the sounds? Like birds, beasts and insects have all set up a chorus of welcome? I even hear the plant life swaying in the breeze and the flutter of the wind through branch and crevice. I can feel slender, twisted stalks rising far overhead. They appear almost translucent, yet support deep violet flowers, do they not? I can smell their scent, something like honeysuckle crossed with maple. Is the





ground cover here a sort of deep gold with russet? I think I remember this area, unless Tambiyah has chosen to repeat her lush designs elsewhere. We should be nearing a range of hills covered with myriad colors. When we come closer, you will see them appear to come to life and whisk up off the ground in a great cloud. They are some sort of insect with beautiful, jewel-toned wings in many colors. When they fly, they make a whirring, whistling noise that can be heard for almost a mile.

Tambiyah herself usually appears as either a voluptuous, though motherly, figure or a battle maiden. She also takes the form of a golden wolf, a jewel-winged insect or a great, flowering tree. In her first humanlike form, she has tanned skin, golden hair and bright green eyes. She often takes the guise of a gardener, with simple robes, a bag of seeds and a planting wand in hand. Her smile glows like the first rays of dawn and she smells like fresh apples and newly turned earth. Her voice sounds deep and rich. In her other form, her hair and skin are dark and her deep brown eyes burn with the intensity of her protectiveness toward women and children. She wears a battle harness, though she needs no weapons beyond her own hands. She sings as she fights and her voice is like the cry of the eagle and the sweet strains of the nightingale.

Should any of us win her favor, she may grant us any of a number of treasures. I know of one such, called Tambiyah's Seeds. I have heard that they grow many wondrous things. She also gives those who perform services for her a shard of maidenstone. I have no knowledge what this does, but I

### *Tambiyah as Totem*

#### **Background Cost:** 8

Although the Veiled Mother is somewhat prejudiced toward all-female packs, she may take a mixed-gender pack as her children if particularly impressed by the pack members. Black Furies respect packs honored by Tambiyah, regardless of gender.

**Traits:** Tambiyah grants each one of her children an additional dot in Appearance; what's more, the pack gains three dice on any Empathy and Medicine rolls. All non-metis children of Tambiyah are granted exceptional fertility; the odds of them siring or bearing true Garou cubs are raised to one in five. This can bring great honor on the pack as time proceeds.

**Ban:** Children of Tambiyah must work towards the welfare of children, whether this means establishing better community day care facilities or caring for their sept's younger Kin.

know it is much prized by the Black Furies. If we convince her of our need or receive her blessing for your quest, she may teach us Gifts as well.

Are there any low, white shrubs nearby? See if they have any green striped seeds on their branches. Bring one to me, if they do, please. Ah, can you smell it as I peel it open?

## Dangers of the Realm

Any number of dangers exist within Tambiyah's realm. In the forests range animals capable of hunting, harming, and possibly even killing Garou. Similar dangers exist in the swampland. Tambiyah, while she is motherly and caring, knows that those whom she nurtures must eventually leave her care and make it on their own. If Garou cannot hold their own against equal opponents, they have no business claiming to be Gaia's defenders. Storytellers should feel free to let imagination rule with regard to what these creatures look like and what powers they might possess that can affect Garou.

Aside from these more mundane threats, the Veiled Lands pose different kinds of threats to visitors in the realm.

### • The Veiled Lands

This region is hidden by heavy layers of mist. Swirls of color dance through the mist, giving it a kaleidoscopic aura. Visibility is severely limited, sometimes reaching only a few inches in front of a character's nose. Odd sounds and whispers emerge from the swirling fog, almost seeming to speak to any who brave its touch. Flashes of light and darkness flicker through the swirling colors, briefly forming patterns and teasing pictures. After a few instances in which characters think they see or hear something significant only to discover nothing there, the sounds and pictures take on more solidity. One by one, those who enter the Veiled Lands hear and see something or someone significant to them. As each focuses on his vision, even momentarily, he loses track of the rest and finds himself alone. Colors swirl, the whispers begin again and the character is thrust into a terrifying surreal scene.

Each scene should feature elements of life and death, forcing the characters to make decisions for one or the

other. For example, the character might be faced with a choice between gaining revenge on a hated enemy or saving an innocent life. Another scene could feature a choice the character must make in judging someone — will they opt for pure justice though it carries a death sentence or choose to be merciful, even against an enemy they have reason to hate? The Storyteller should try to construct scenes which might logically happen, such as locating the rest of the party again through shouting and stumbling blindly through the mist only to then be attacked by creatures who apparently followed the noise. Several attacks and retreats later, the character (and his friends) comes upon one of the creatures, wounded and in peril of dying. Instances reminiscent of things from the character's past can be used so long as they are at least thinly disguised. If desired, the Storyteller may bring in other characters to act as "themselves" in these scenes if the troupe seems mature. No one but the one character is actually present for his own scene, however. Any damage the character sustains during the scene is real, though the character is only half as wounded as he seems to be. Characters rendered unconscious or dead awaken soon thereafter.

Once each character has made some sort of choice, they can all meet back together and escape the Veiled Lands. The swirls seem to just evaporate around them, leaving them in a barren, rocky area on the outskirts of Tambiyah's Fields. Tambiyah rewards those who chose life over death while admonishing those who chose death to think more clearly. *"Death is an option any unthinking beast can bring about. Can you create life? Then do not throw away this precious gift so quickly."*

It's like a breath of the sweetest air. Here, each of you take a bite of the pulp. Can you describe it? Neither can I. The closest I can come is to say it tastes like what I most desired at this time. Beyond the hills lies a region of turquoise lakes set into a flatland of white sands. Father out within this desert that is not a desert lie Tambiyah's Fields, where we will most likely meet the Incarna.

### Tambiyah's Fields

This is the heart of the Veiled Mother's realm. Though it is known as Tambiyah's Fields, every type of terrain you can imagine lies somewhere within. I can no longer see the grasses and trees, the flowers and vines, yet I can hear leaves beneath our feet, the chirping of small animals, even the sound of waves lapping in the distance. I can imagine the mountains as I last saw them, dark with trees on their lower slopes, lighter at high elevations where snow collects. Somewhere near the sea, I know there is marshland where bright birds call and slithering things slide into the water or sleep within the sheltering reeds. The soil itself is redolent with the life

bursting from it and the death that presages that fertility. I smell the scents of evergreen, of prey and of hunter. When last I visited, we ran through those woods with strange beasts like nothing I'd seen before, yet they were wolflike enough that we accompanied them on their hunt and drank the hot blood of the prey we hunted. If I have given you the impression that all was serene and tame here, then I have done you a disservice. Just as we ourselves embody both spirituality and violence, so too does the nature under Tambiyah's care.

Here you will find dark, tangled forests holding beasts that hunt those like us and ordered fields of ripening grain and vegetables. There also exists a region known as the Veiled Lands. Tambiyah does not prevent us from entering this strange area, but she usually warns those who wish to enter that they may not emerge exactly the same as they went in. We did not enter the Veiled Lands when I was here before, so I am unsure what she meant by that. Nonetheless, I would urge caution.

We will stay in the pleasant lands of Tambiyah to rest and heal for a while and then we will journey onward.

## Eshtarra

### Incarna of Gaia

We have reverted to traveling a moon road since we now head back toward Sokhta's sister. Sometimes I wish I still had my sight, for there comes a special feeling when you see Eshtarra's blue and green and white orb hanging in the sky awaiting your return to her. As strange as it may sound, when first I traveled the star roads, I was most affected by seeing the Incarna of my own home. I know that many of you are far travelers as well, and you have earned your rank in countless battles against the Wyrn and its minions both in the earthly realm and the Umbra. This is probably the first time, however, you have left Gaia's realm only to return to a separate facet of her in Eshtarra's domain. It will be like, yet unlike what you are used to experiencing in other parts of the Umbra.

Eshtarra is called the Songteller. As might be expected, she, like Tambiyah favors Galliards and she takes a special interest in the Fianna for their love of song and story. Do you hear the howls? Those are Eshtarra's protectors who come even now to challenge our right to be here. Do you see them now? Huge black wolves with sprinklings of white on them, patterned like stars? When I first saw them, they reminded me very much of Altair, my sept leader. I like to think that he once served as one of Eshtarra's defenders and was rewarded for his service by being made Garou; at other times I wonder if he has been so marked in life because Gaia intends him to serve here after death.

We must make ourselves known to Eshtarra's pack as defenders of Gaia. Will one of you howl a greeting and a request to enter her domain? They will then listen while we explain who we are and what we want here. Quickly, compose a song concerning our travels so that we may present them with evidence of our goodwill. They will hear the song and judge us by it. Then we will continue on into the domain. If we came with malice in our hearts or sought to attack, the pack would battle us to the death, and it would not be an easy fight, despite your prowess. These spirit wolves are our equals or better in combat and I have no idea how many they can summon to aid them.

Since we have left her for awhile, we may turn back toward this domain with fresh vision. Sometimes you are too close to understand what it is that lies before you. I believe this is often the case with Eshtarra. We must leave her for a time so that we learn to appreciate her. The Songteller corresponds to the planet Earth, though she does not reflect things exactly as the Umbral reflection of Gaia. The nearest portions of the Umbra show things as they truly are, with particularly spiritual areas appearing even more so in the spirit world and blights showing their true colors even if they aren't noticeable as such on the earthly side of the Gauntlet. Rather than mirroring things as they are, as the Penumbra does, Eshtarra's realm depicts them as they once were or might be. It's a subtle distinction, but an important one. If you thought Tambiyah's domain was lush and fertile, I can take you to places in





Eshtarra's realm that would make you believe the Veiled Mother lived amid barrenness. Sadly, the other extreme — the blasted lands — is as real in her domain.

We have arrived! I hear the crashing of waves upon a beach and smell that fresh salt scent that tells me I am near the sea. When last I came to this idyllic spot, the waves were a deep azure crested with foaming white. They fell upon black sand beaches that sparkled like diamonds in starlight, and left behind tiny treasures, shells and rounded rocks and glowing sea grasses. Silvery fish leapt atop the waves, dancing for their own amusement. Rolling upward from the beach arose verdant hills and cliffs, blessed with exotically scented tropical flowers, swaying green-topped trees and white-ribboned waterfalls that plunged into deep, lily-graced pools. Bright winged birds flew from tree to tree, singing out greetings to us as we moved along the beach and monkey-creatures tossed fruits at us. We caught them and ate them, their sweet juices running down our chins, and they satisfied any thirst or hunger we felt. Higher still rose the central crater, its volcanic nature made apparent by its conical shape and the soft glow and clouds of steam crowning it. Truly the sort of unspoiled paradise such as we once had on earth, or else some poet's heartfelt image of what might have been except for civilization. Tell me that it has not changed.

And yet, should we travel onward in another direction, we might come to a soul-dead city, its bloated buildings forming canyons of despair where twisted wrecks of men hunt one another for sport or by necessity. Here glaring neon pulses sickness into the air alongside the reeking fumes of factories and transports. Lasers cut the night, aimed by those who live higher up among the skyscrapers, spearing through those unable to escape their burning beams. Famine-bellied children covered in excrement haunt the streets begging for one crust of food, willing to sell their souls for a taste of clean water. Acidic rain pours down, pitting the rusting hulks of cars abandoned in the alleyways. Crews sweep through the streets, picking up the shattered bodies of murdered victims and dead infants, transporting them to the factory furnaces, where their flesh becomes fuel for the processes of industry. Dead-eyed workers move in lines like zombies commanded to carry out some dread mission by their master. The cries of misery are overwhelmed only by the nauseating stench. Is this what will be or only the fevered imaginings of a Galliard who has seen too much?

They might be either in this realm.

Eshtarra is the embodiment of every song, every story, every poem, every thought concerning the Earth. She herself can assume almost any form, but she prefers to remain a natural part of the realm itself. She might be a tree or an outcropping of mineral-veined rock. She could be a single blade of grass or the ocean's foam. Eshtarra could be the sound of the wind in the reeds or the taste of salt on the air. We must travel through her lands noting what we can before she will assume a form that will speak with us and answer our questions.

On my prior visit, she eventually consented to meet with us and took the form of a woman who was somehow still the land itself. Her hair fell in tangled green waves down her back, twisting like vines and plants seeking sunlight. Her skin was like smooth wood, patterned with markings like growth rings and as pale as a birch tree. Her blue eyes reflected within them all the oceans, seas and lakes of the land and as she moved, tears ran down her face and became flowing streams. Her clothing, a simple gown, seemed woven from wheat and green grasses, while her sandals seemed — impossibly — to be hewn from stone and set with glittering gems. Around her brow she wore a circlet of feathers and her trailing cloak was constructed of leaves and flowers. Wherever she walked, she sang or spoke, and at her coming, the land took on the guise of whatever she sang about.

She spoke softly with us and offered us knowledge and Gifts if we could increase her repertoire of songs, poems and stories about the Earth and our place in it. She was particularly gracious to those who composed songs about her. Those who could not — or rather those who would not even try — to create a new tale or tune, she spurned, saying that the Garou must know beauty and heed ancient melodies and lore if we were to triumph over our enemies. She met us at her stronghold, which is called Eshtarra's Glade. If you wish, we will go there now.

### *Eshtarra's Glade*

Do you hear it? The song hangs in the air here, voiced by those tiny birds that make up the outer ring of Eshtarra's Glade. What looks like a chaotic jumble of flowering bushes ahead of us are thousands of birds of various colors perched or flying along the perimeter of the glade. If we walk toward them and sing ourselves, they will move aside and let us through. Once we pass the outer ring of birds, we enter a grassy glade starred with tiny flowers. A shallow brook crosses the clearing. If you looked back once you'd entered, you'd see a wall of trees — oak, ash, alder, birch, rowan, hazel, elder, hawthorn, holly and willow. Vines heavy with fruit and silvered ivy line their trunks. In the center of the glade rests a stone, an enormous unpolished crystal shot through with veins of gold.

Harmonious tones resonate throughout the glade, emanating from or else enhanced by the stone. This crystal serves as the seat of the Incarna. Here Eshtarra meets with those who seek her. She waits for her visitors, asking only that they sing with her, a song of love for the earth; a song of sorrow for her

### *Eshtarra as Totem*

**Background Cost: 8**

Eshtarra herself prefers not to act as a totem to packs, feeling that such packs might grow heady with arrogance, believing themselves Gaia's especial favorites. When she takes a pack, she does so in her aspect of Danu (Werewolf, pg. 263).

## Dangers of the Realm

Characters can stumble across almost anything in Eshtarra's domain. Edenic landscapes may hold serpents whose poison disables Garou, and the blighted areas may shelter insane, infested beings capable of killing those who are not wary enough. Of all the planetary realms, Eshtarra's is closest to being invaded by the spirits and warriors of the Wyrms.

Further, an excess of anything can be bad. Such is the problem with accepting the Lady Eshtarra's offer to rest upon the Songstone. While there is a chance that it will grant the petitioner a vision or the ability to sing with a voice like a lark, it is equally likely that the stone may cause a troubling effect instead.

### • The Songstone

This gold-threaded crystal serves as Eshtarra's throne. When invoked by those whom she gives permission, it may cause one of several different effects. Roll one die to determine which effect takes place. Voice and Vision have already been explained. The less fortunate results are detailed below.

Die Roll	Effect
1-2	Lamentation†
3-4	Revelry††
5-6	Voice
7-8	Vision
9-10	Player's choice of insight (vision) or expression (voice)

† **Lamentation:** When the character seats herself upon the stone and invokes its power, she is filled with a song of such poignant sorrow that she cannot get it out of her head. Everything she does is tempered by sadness; she feels absolute despair. Such a gloomy outlook hinders the character in everything she does. After all, if what she tries is doomed to fail, why try very hard? The character must labor under a +2 difficulty to all dice rolls until she succeeds at a significant task (which task counts is determined by the Storyteller) despite her less than stellar performance. Until that time, she labors under this curse.

†† **Revelry:** This is the opposite of lamentation. Under this curse, the character hears a song so full of mirth that he cannot remain serious for more than a moment at a time. Like a Ragabash on overdrive, the character plays tricks, finds everything funny and cannot concentrate on anything but hilarity for long. This renders the character incapable of any effective action. After all, if everything is a joke, what harm is there in slacking off? The effect is again to suffer a +2 difficulty to all rolls until he succeeds at a significant task despite his handicap. Until that time, he remains under the curse.

pain. She will ask the same of us. The song she requires is a new one, one we've never sung before. If some among us lack a good ear or a pleasing voice, we may speak our song instead, making of it a poem or story. It can be about anything, but it must be true, a true story of something you have done, somewhere you have been or even thoughts you have. So long as it is true to your heart and true to the earth, your offering will be accepted. Eshtarra takes what we give and weaves it into her own stories and songs.

If she is pleased, she may offer us something in return — perhaps a talen or a Gift. I know one such Gift, granted to me last time I visited. It is called Oaksong — the gift of speech with the inanimate yet living. She also allows those who please her to rest upon the crystal seat. Those who accept may be granted a vision or gifted with an ability to sing. There is danger in the stone however, for its effects are not always so beneficial.

I hope that someday we will see the Earth returned to some of the more idyllic areas of Eshtarra's realm — and that we never fall to the depths of others. It has been a pleasure spending time in some of my favorite regions here. May Gaia grant that I return someday. For now, we will walk the star roads once again to the barren domain of the Ice Warrior.

## Nerigal Incarna of Mars

We turn our way now to the last of those known as the earthly or inner planets. Riding the star roads is not so difficult from Eshtarra's realm to Nerigal's, for he is her closest neighbor besides Sokhta. The Ice Warrior, who is sometimes known as the Blooded One, corresponds to the planet Mars. He is the quintessential warrior — naturally, he favors Ahroun and the Get of Fenris. Though I know it to be a sign of his violence, I used to enjoy looking for his red planet among the other Incarnae. I no longer have that sight and now I am glad. It must gall him to have another red presence in the Aetherial skies, a presence that is anathema to all he represents.

You will hear no sounds as we travel toward Nerigal's domain. Nor will you sense anything else, until we come closer to the Incarna's realm. Then we will hear the clash of arms and the screams of warriors and scent the smell of blood. Do you see Nerigal's Weapons yet? That's what his spirit minions are called. They guard his realm from intrusion by those who would offend their lord. Gaining access to the presence of Nerigal involves besting his Weapons in some sort of physical battle or contest. Once we prove our worthiness as warriors or our use as support in combat, we may pass beyond the perimeter of the Incarna's realm and confront the Ice Warrior himself.

From a distance, the realm appears to be completely red, but as we come closer you should be able to see that the coloration comes from the red-orange dust storms that rage over the whole domain. We must brave this storm to enter. But before encountering the dust, we should be approaching



a field of ice shards, which circle the realm above the dust. Not all battles in this domain are against living opponents. Do not expect to emerge from either the ice field or the dust unscathed. The shards can inflict severe damage, being composed of a substance called blood ice, and the dust storm's powerful winds and cutting particles also damage Garou.

Once beyond the dust storms, we enter the domain itself. Though much of the barren land is red, there are also portions that appear brown and gray or even a smoky blue. These delineate great canyon features (similar to the canals seen from Earth) that stretch several miles deep and are as long as the North American continent side-to-side. The highest point in the realm is a great extinct volcano, the largest known among the realms of the Incarnae. It reaches over three times higher than Mount Everest. This great volcano's caldera serves as a proving ground for those who wish to win Nerigal's attention and favor. At two places, the poles, the realm appears white due to the ice found there. The Ice Warrior keeps his stronghold in one of these frozen regions, emerging to pit himself against the rigors of his realm and any interlopers foolish enough to intrude unwanted upon his domain.

Nerigal keeps his realm quite close to the realities of the planet Mars as it exists in the physical realm and invokes his right to force visitors to undergo the exigencies of the environment. While we do not have to breathe here (which is lucky for us since we'd otherwise be trying to breathe in vacuum) or worry about differences in gravity, it is important because it means there is only water available at the poles and that water is locked in ice. We will be unable to find anything to slake our thirst even though we must traverse his dust storm and trek across terrain worse than any badlands until we reach his proving ground inside the volcano.

That wouldn't be so bad if the land were flat, but it folds and cracks in ridges and craters, thrusts upward as stony, unforgiving mountains and plunges in canals and canyons deeper than the Grand Canyon. Add to this the fact that Nerigal's realm is cold. During the day, the temperature remains at twenty degrees below zero or so, but at night, it falls to about a hundred and fifty degrees below. There is no real shelter. We must simply survive somehow and keep moving. This is Nerigal's way of allowing us to prove our worthiness, both to him and to ourselves. I am evidence that it can be survived, for I have done so before. We will be weak. We will be thirsty and probably hungry as well by the time we reach the volcano, but we *will* reach it if we believe we can.

I must admit that Nerigal presents an imposing figure as I remember him. He appeared to us as an enormous gray-white wolf with golden eyes and in both man and Crinos forms. I know he can take other forms; I presume he assumed these simply because they would be familiar to us. As a man, the Ice Warrior stood well over six feet tall, with broad shoulders and a lean, muscular frame. His light brown hair is worn long and falls freely over his shoulders, since he disdains to keep opponents from grabbing it during battle.



Bearded and battle-hardened, he prefers well-worn leathers and furs. His beard and furs are both ice rimed and his cobalt blue eyes blaze with intensity. He carries no weapons with him, but can summon any he needs with a thought. In battle, he prefers swords and spears or the Ice Klaive which is his special chosen weapon so that he may face his foes directly rather than trying to harm them at a distance. By his nature, the Ice Warrior is violent, but he is also honorable.

Nerigal expects deference from those who visit him, but he also respects strength and determination. If we grovel excessively or seem to lack the courage of our convictions, we will receive little more from him than contempt. If we strike a balance between honoring Nerigal with the respect due him and retaining our own sense of pride and worthiness, we stand a decent chance of receiving a fair hearing from the Ice Warrior. Nerigal expects honesty and forthrightness in those who deal with him. He despises trickery and obfuscation in all its forms and has little patience with anyone who attempts to curry his favor in an obvious fashion. We must take care not to be too obsequious, yet not offend him. The more honorable and honest we are with him, the better. Of course, he also respects endurance and fighting prowess, so don't hold back from showing your best if you have the chance.

When we make it to the Proving Ground, we will have already shown the Incarna that we possess both stamina and perseverance. Hold that in your thoughts as we undergo the arduous journey to his place of power.

## *Nerigal's Proving Ground*

Inside the caldera of the largest volcano in the Ice Warrior's realm lies Nerigal's Proving Ground. The volcano long ago became extinct in regard to actual eruptions, forming a hard, solid crust we may move about on. Still, beneath its covering mantle of rock, deep fires

### *Nerigal as Totem*

#### **Background Cost: 8**

The Ice Warrior is among the more willing of pack patrons; it pleases him that packs should shed blood in his name. He will lend his favor to virtually any pack brave enough to seek him out and request his guidance.

**Traits:** Children of Nerigal never enter fox frenzy; they always enter berserk frenzy. The Ice Warrior also grants each pack member an additional die to Brawl and Melee dice pools, and two temporary points of Glory. Finally, each pack member gains an extra die to soak rolls (which cannot be used to soak silver).

**Ban:** Nerigal's children are forbidden to show fear. They may not retreat once combat is joined, and are not allowed to avoid obstacles rather than overcoming them.

remain, making the Proving Ground one of the warmest places in the realm. While not exactly balmy, the temperature inside the Proving Ground is above zero degrees Fahrenheit. Take heart! We have already proven something about ourselves by reaching this place. Now, however, the second phase of our testing begins and we are already weakened. If we wish to speak with the Incarna, we must accept the challenge laid upon us here. Think carefully, we have come far for this chance, but if we lose the challenge, Nerigal reserves the right to slay us all for our weakness and incompetence.

Look out across the barren field. Out there lie countless pits and traps of all sorts — the sorts of traps the Romans used to construct in their arenas to handicap their gladiators. Some are deadly, some merely inconvenient. You are expected to meet and battle foes of the Incarna's choice out there. Weapons lie about, waiting to be picked up, if you choose to use them. Otherwise, claws and teeth remain our best tools. Nerigal expects us to fight as a team even when we break off to fight individual opponents. One or more of us may fail, but others can make up for those losses through winning their own challenges and combats. Mine will be a lesser opponent due to my blindness, which Nerigal knows of, yet I am still expected to give my all. I am a master of Kailindo; if I fight one whit less than my best, the Ice Warrior will know. He can sense the same with each of you. You must be utterly committed to winning — honorably — or he may slay you on the spot for wasting his time. A warning: We must strive with every fiber of our beings to triumph, but we must not give in to battle lust. Although berserkers have their place, that place is after everything else has been tried. Battle should be as much about intelligence, planning and skill as ferocity. That is what distinguishes us from mere beasts. Should we prove superior, do not be surprised if the Blooded One himself then challenges us. That one, we aren't expected to win. Just make a good showing and fight bravely.

If we overcome all his challenges, Nerigal will hear our petitions and may grant us fetishes or Gifts. He has been known to give particularly impressive warriors Ice Klaives like his own chosen weapon. He may also reward those who battle honestly and fearlessly with shards of blood ice. Certainly, Nerigal's realm is one of the most challenging and deadly among the planetary Incarnae, but the Ice Warrior is also generous in his rewards to those who deserve them.

Once we have overcome our opponents and spoken with Nerigal, we may rest for a while. Despite the inhospitable environment elsewhere in the realm, here within the Proving Grounds Nerigal provides us with warm, comfortable quarters, food, drink and healing, should we need it. Once we are back at full strength we will journey onward to the domain of Rorg. Do not forget the lessons we learned here; they will serve us well in the Hunter's realm.

## *Dangers of the Realm*

It seems odd to describe the dangers to be found in Nerigal's domain since the whole realm is dangerous in and of itself — and is designed to be that way. Almost anything in the domain can potentially be deadly, from Nerigal's Weapons to the ice shards, from the dust storms, to the prospect of dying of thirst. Traversing the realm from the point of entry to the volcanic proving ground takes approximately four to five days. Those days should be an exercise of hellish proportions. Unless all cooperate, the group won't survive the journey. Once they reach the arena, however, Nerigal provides them with water and a chance to rest and heal for an hour or so before they begin their combats.

### • Nerigal's Weapons

These are martial Star-spirits who intercept all visitors to their lord's domain. They immediately attack rather than pausing to parley. Should the party respond in kind, the Weapons attempt to take their measure without killing them. Anyone trying to talk to the spirits or use Gifts against them become subject to more attacks as more Weapons arrive to deal with them. Nerigal wants to know the group's fighting prowess and physical capabilities, not how diplomatic they are or how many Gifts they know. Using Gifts that enhance one's combat abilities is not seen in the same light and is perfectly permissible. Once all of the group has attempted direct combat with the Weapons, the spirits accord them respect and allow them to pass unhindered.

### • Blood Ice

These sharp shards of ice encircle Nerigal's realm about twelve or so miles above the surface. The ice looks as though it were formed from a mixture of blood and water. Some almost seem to hold drops of blood within otherwise clear ice, while others are streaked or flecked with red. The ice crystals are razor-sharp and can inflict aggravated damage on Garou. Those moving through the ice field must make Dexterity + Athletics rolls (difficulty 8) to avoid being injured by the shards. Three successes are necessary to traverse the ice shards without damage. For every success that is not earned, the Garou suffers one health level of aggravated damage (i.e. if they achieve no successes, they take three levels of damage; each success removes one of three potential levels of damage). Those who botch are somehow disoriented within the ice field. They must pause to gain their bearings and suffer another round of attacks as well as taking the three levels of damage from the first round.

### • Dust Storms

A never ending dust storm made up of particles of rock, rust and dirt from the surface rages for miles above the actual realm. Located just below the encircling field of ice shards, the dust storm is some ten miles thick. Those passing through the storm find themselves about a mile above the surface when they emerge from it. The flying debris and ferocity of the winds can harm Garou, even though it is not aggravated damage. The group takes three rounds to pass through the storm, which also negates visibility (i.e. it is impossible to see the surface from above until one has passed through the storm, nor can the characters see one another until they emerge at the bottom. If they aren't holding hands when they enter, they may become separated and have to regroup once they've gotten to the ground.). Each player should make three rolls on her character's Stamina (difficulty 8) to avoid taking damage from the storm. As above with the ice shards, three successes are necessary to avoid all damage. A botch results in an extra turn within the storm. While it isn't aggravated damage, it might potentially render a Garou unconscious since she will have little time to heal between buffets. Once out of the storm, of course, she may heal as usual.

### • Foes In the Proving Ground

These could be almost anything — Leeches, Black Spiral Dancers, physically powerful Banes, Star-spirits, beasts from another age or weird alien creatures. The Storyteller should feel free to be creative — of course, pitting characters against such overwhelming odds that they have no hope of winning isn't a fair combat. If the character has had bad luck against a certain kind of opponent before, this might be a good time to pit her against another of the same sort. Whether these are real creatures the Incarna has somehow captured for use in his tests or phantasms he conjures for the characters to prove themselves against is up to individual Storytellers. Even phantasms act intelligently and cause real damage.

Aside from the actual combatants, the arena holds numerous traps designed to test the reflexes and strength of the combatants as they battle. Pit traps with silver spikes at the bottom, walls that spring up and entrap a fighter on two sides, and missiles which emerge from stelae to briefly weaken or paralyze a limb are a few such obstacles. Creative Storytellers will undoubtedly think of many more.





## Rorg

### *Incarna of Turog*

Between the interior planetary Incarnae and the exterior ones lies a region ruled by Rorg, the Many-Taloned Hunter. In this region, numerous asteroids orbit. Some say that these are the remnants of another planet called Turog that once existed here. Long ago, so long that none save the Incarnae themselves remember, Turog was destroyed. Some say he quarreled with a mighty Wyrmspirit who tore him into pieces. As an insult to all, it is said the Wyrmspirit scattered Turog's remains between Nerigal, our greatest warrior, and Zarok, the ruling one, so that neither would forget the Wyrmspirit's power.

Despite the destruction of his physical body, Turog's hatred for the Wyrmspirit and his ferocity would not allow him to die. Instead, each piece of him drew as close to the other pieces as it could and resumed his place patrolling his region of the Aetherial heavens. The other Incarnae, knowing of the continual agony he endures, dared not gainsay him.

It isn't hard to locate Rorg's realm. Even before we leave Nerigal's domain, you can see the asteroid field that lies before us. I already feel them whirling and tumbling in the distance. As we move closer, we can hear a strange, muffled sound. It reminds me of an ongoing howl of sorrow for the passing of a hero. Underneath that cry lies another, softer one, an agonized moan of unending pain. We will hear these sounds all the time we are within Rorg's domain. Some Garou of lesser nerve have been driven into Harano when they stayed overlong in the Many-Taloned Hunter's vicinity.

We must thread our way through the careening debris of pitted gray rock in search of one of the larger pieces. Do

### *Rorg as Totem*

#### **Background Cost: 10**

Rorg won't act as a pack totem to any group without at least one Red Talon, and he refuses to patronize packs he considers "lenient." Even so, his patronage can be useful, as his children can draw on a portion of his scattered yet unified power.

**Traits:** Whenever Rorg's children act as a pack to accomplish a goal, whether teaming up against a single opponent in combat or pooling their knowledge to devise a plan, they gain -1 to *all* difficulties relevant to the task. (In the instance of combat, this would include initiative, attack and damage rolls, but not soak rolls—the goal would be to defeat the enemy, not to survive his attacks.) Furthermore, Rorg grants his children an additional three dice in Primal-Urge and teaches them the Galliard Gift: Mindspeak.

**Ban:** Children of Rorg are not allowed to forgive until any crimes committed against them or their loved ones have been justly punished.

## *Dangers of the Realm*

The main threat in the realm is the Incarna himself. Rorg is none too stable. While he has not yet completely lost his sanity, there is a savage darkness that burns within him awaiting a spark to set it ablaze. He's like a cornered grizzly that's been wounded. His non-feral aspects literally hang by a thread and he could snap at any time. Nonetheless, Rorg should evoke some feelings of sadness, loss and pity in the characters. He, like the dwindling Garou (especially the Red Talons), may be facing his last hours, and like his wolf-cousins, he doesn't really understand why. Nor does he know why the other Incarna do not help him. If the characters prove too disrespectful or too reluctant to acknowledge his authority and his right to the hunt, it may be the push that sends him fully into insanity. When that happens, he may become a force of sheer, savage fury that knows no reason and gives no quarter. Characters had better escape his realm quickly or be prepared to die.

### • Stone Crushers

The smaller asteroids of Rorg's realm serve as at least a modicum of protection for the Incarna. When anyone enters unannounced, they move out of their paths and try to clash together to hinder, slow or harm the intruders. They continue trying until those entering the realm settle onto an asteroid large enough to support all of them easily. Characters may attempt to avoid them by rolling Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 7). As they are somewhat slow moving (at least relative to the characters' own movement in space), only one success is needed per turn. Each failed roll results in the character suffering 8 dice of nonaggravated damage which may be soaked as usual. It takes three or four turns to find a larger asteroid.

### • Despairing Moan

This moaning howl continuously plays under everything that goes on in the realm. Not always audible, nor always consciously acknowledged, it nonetheless has an effect on the characters' nerves. For every hour the characters spend in Rorg's realm, they must roll Wits + Primal-Urge (difficulty 7) or fall prey to the despair and pain evident in the sound. The Storyteller should determine what effect Harano has on the character's ability to continue the quest. It would be unfair to cripple unlucky characters for the remainder of their quest, so it is up to the Storyteller to decide how long the Harano should last or to allow the characters to find some way to alleviate the despair they feel.

not be surprised if several smaller pieces seem to conspire against us, attempting to clash together and damage us. Though his pieces are scattered, they still respond to a single commanding intelligence and work together as much as they are able. When we find a piece that is a few miles in

diameter, we must land on it and attempt to communicate with Rorg more directly. Unless you are Red Talon or a particularly savage Ahroun, do not expect a welcome.

There is little left among these scattered remains to attract anyone, nothing anyone could want, not even a tempting target for corruption. What were once rumored to be pristine landscapes of vast, dark forests, plains fat with game and mountains rich with prey are now circling blocks of barrenness. In some way, the largest pieces function as his head and heart, but the smaller chunks seem interchangeable.

I have always pitied Rorg, and yet I must admire him for remaining at his post despite all else. This is why I can accept the hatred and cruelty he shows to all who come to interact with him. I ask all of you to keep this in mind as well. Rorg was once a mighty hunter. In fact, he still possesses the ability and likes to prove it to such as us. But he is now in temperament more like the wounded beast that searches desperately for some escape from the inevitable. It makes him unpredictable and dangerous.

Rorg's planet is no more. His own time is running out and he knows this. His ongoing torture and the knowledge of his coming demise are what fill Rorg with such uncontrollable rage. Just like the Red Talons, who find themselves scattered and adrift in the modern world, he may be facing the last savage days before he too ceases to be.

The Incarna himself might not deign to appear to us, or at least I have heard from others that he has refused to respond to their presence before. If he does meet with us, be prepared to defend your right to exist. Think of when you were mere pups trying to explain to the meanest alpha within a protectorate why you should be given any say in sept matters and you'll have an idea what Rorg's questioning is like. If you respond with your own savagery and pride, he may respect you and realize he cannot bully you — or he may just tear your throat out for your impertinence. He may be diminished and dying, but he is still an Incarna.

When I saw him before, he appeared in two guises. His preferred form was that of a huge snarling red-coated wolf with talons like scythes and gleaming silver teeth. Rorg's amber eyes burned with rage and foam ran from his mouth. He prowled his territory with hackles upraised to let us know beyond any doubt who rules here. The Incarna snapped at anyone who dared come too close to him, though he did listen to what we had to say.

His other form was human, or nearly so, though he seemed to prefer to remain a wolf most often. Tall and muscled, his hair and beard were wild and matted, of a dark auburn color. His eyes remained amber, but somehow seemed even more feral in this form than the other. On his head he wore a rack of antlers draped with forest growth or perhaps the antlers grew there naturally. His clothing seemed made of tree bark woven with wool. The Incarna's cloak was of fur — rabbit, fox, marten and such — and his feet were wrapped in leather. On his hands he wore wolf's claws and his teeth were filed to points. At his hip, strung upon a belt of twisted vines, hung a hollowed horn.

## Rorg's Hunt

Although I told you that the various asteroid pieces can come together, I did not make clear that the Incarna can briefly call several of them into an alignment which provides him with territory over which to stage a hunt. When he does this, each piece takes on a role. Some become ground for us to walk on, others assume the guise of hedges or trees, lakes and hills, while more become the coursing

hounds who accompany us on the hunt. Although I cannot reveal to you the details, Rorg will ask us to join his hunt. It is up to each of you to accept or refuse. I cannot guide you in the correct choice; you must decide that for yourselves.

Should we prove ourselves to Rorg, like the other Incarna, he might be inclined to help us, either by giving us items of power or through teaching us Gifts. I know of no object he might confer upon us; he has so little himself.

### The Test of the Hunter

Like Herne or Cerrunos, lords of the wild hunt, Rorg gives the characters a chance to accompany him as he chases prey through his scatterling realm. He shows them the prey they are expected to help him run to ground and tear apart with the primal savagery of wolves. Those prey include hares, deer, badgers, goats or sheep... and human adults and children. There is one human for each Garou in the group. These last appeal to the characters, begging them for help, offering them anything for their lives. They implore the characters to intercede for them with Rorg, who blames them for the crimes of all humanity.

If the characters do so, Rorg counters by sneering that he, at least, learned the wisdom of maintaining the Impergium. Again, he asks the characters to accompany him. They may refuse or agree. Those who refuse appear to anger the Incarna. Rorg roughly tells each character who refuses to choose one victim and remove them from the group to be hunted. Once the characters have made their choices, he looks at the ones who each saved a victim and orders that character to take the victim's place. Of course, it is possible that when a character pleads for a victim and removes one from the hunt, he may offer to take the victim's place before Rorg commands it. In that case, Rorg is impressed by the character's bravery and shows his approval to the first one to do this. Subsequent offers he sees as copycat moves designed to win respect the copycat doesn't deserve. He orders any characters who agreed to hunt alongside him to remain with him while the prey is given a five-minute head start. After that time, he leads the remaining characters in pursuit of their prey — including their comrades. The hunt is a harrowing chase. The quarry constantly hear the hounds just behind them and find hiding places only to be spotted and forced to run again. Eventually, they run into an open clearing walled on all sides by trees that close in and refuse to let them pass. Once the prey is trapped there, the Incarna and the rest of the hunt leisurely rides in.

Obviously, if the group breaks apart on whether to save humans or not and the softhearted ones become the prey, there are likely to be protests from both sides. Those who chose to save a human life must take that human's place or return the human to the hunt. Reneging and placing the human back in the hunt is the basest form of cowardice and should be met with severe loss of Renown. Some who saved

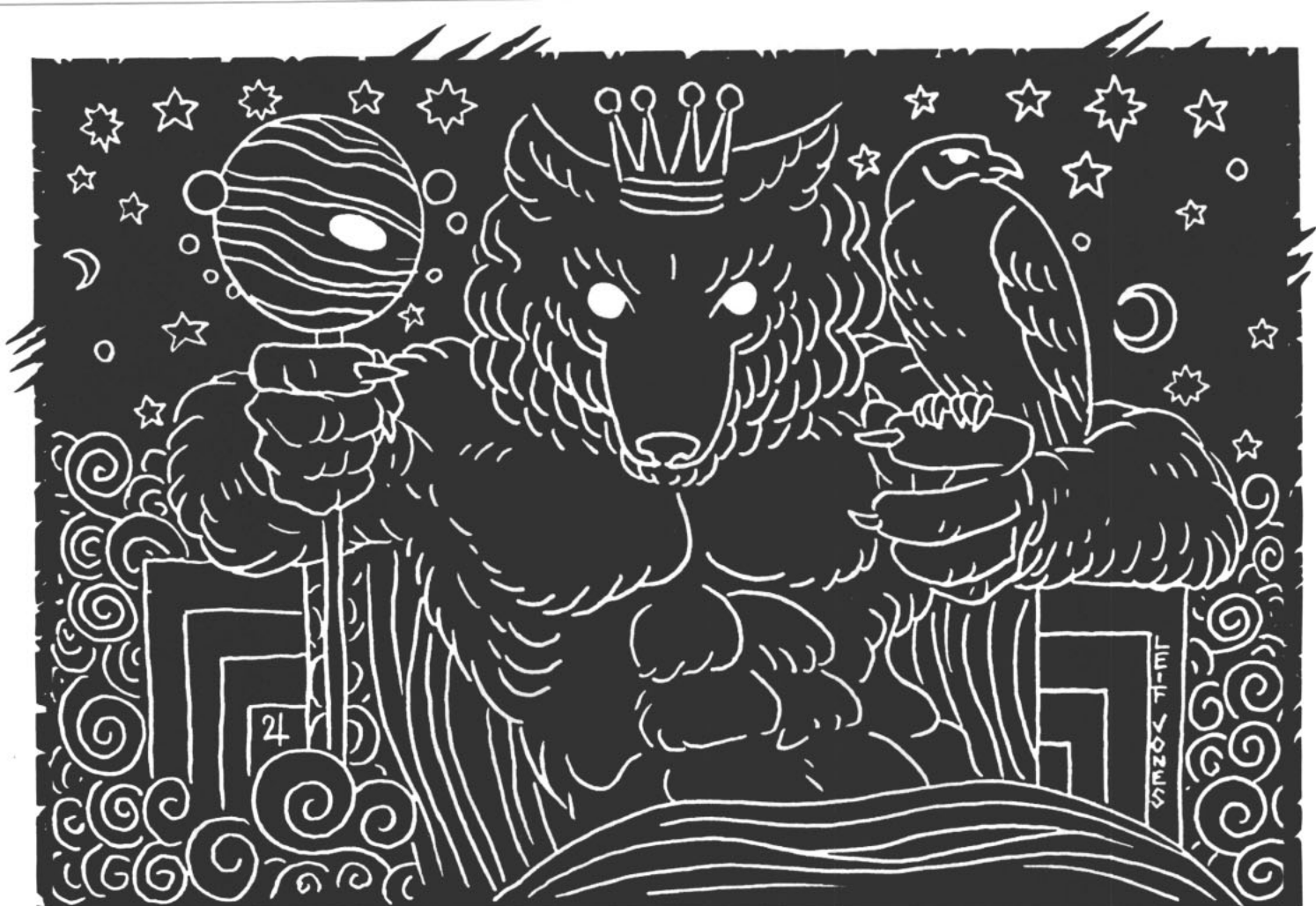
humans may protest that all of them ought to be saved and say that they have no intention of allowing either themselves or any humans to be hunted. While noble, such characters should remember that they are in the Incarna's domain and subject to his laws. The Incarna simply looks at them, then informs them that they have "four minutes, three minutes..." and so on. If they do not take flight, when the time is up, Rorg attacks, striking first at a human. The other humans scatter screaming and Rorg makes it clear he will kill the characters where they stand unless they too scatter. "You need only elude me for one hour and you have won," he tells them.

The characters who chose to proceed with the hunt may feel very differently about hunting their own packmates and friends and may refuse to participate. If they do, Rorg offers them the chance to take a human's place and become the hunted as well. Refusal is met with the same choice as that given to their more softhearted companions. Those who remain with Rorg are expected to do their best to track down the other characters, who are the most dangerous prey and therefore the most interesting sport. At some point, it might become clear to those who are hunting that they are only expected to locate the prey and catch up with it in such a way that it is obvious they could have harmed them. They aren't required to harm anything not tainted by the Wyrms.

If the characters actually attempt to run ahead of the Incarna or hide and ambush him or lead humans to safety, when Rorg catches up (and he will), he gives them only token wounds, almost as if playing hide and seek or tag. Those who refuse to participate are subject to his real rage, however, and some characters could actually die. Should disaster strike and the whole group completely fails to get it, instead making a last stand, Rorg kills them all. The characters might then awaken and realize they've experienced a premonition. The scene for the hunt begins again from the beginning, allowing them a second chance.

Characters who make no attempt to help the humans gain nothing, but also lose nothing. The "humans," like the rest of the prey, are merely other pieces of asteroid, just like the landscape. Those who do try to help and take their places gain a point of Honor. Any who participate in the hunt in the true spirit of the hunter or the hunted win Rorg's favor.





Once we pass through Rorg's realm, we enter into the area of the Aetherial where the outer or gaseous planetary Incarnae dwell. We must pull ourselves together and throw off the primal aura of Rorg's realm, for now we enter the domain of Zarok, the Crowned Ruler.

## Zarok

### *Incarna of Jupiter*

The solar winds are swift! There can be no doubt what the massive brown, red-orange and yellow-banded planet that lies before us is. No, I cannot see it — but I feel its majestic presence in the Aetherial skies, and I shall never forget the image. Zarok, the Crowned Ruler, corresponds to the planet Jupiter; like it, his realm is the largest among those of the planetary Incarnae. Humans call Jupiter a gas giant; here, Zarok's realm contains little surface land, but a great deal of cloudy realm. Nonetheless, the core burns hot enough that the less solid areas attain more warmth from it than from the sun (whom Zarok believes thinks far too much of himself already). In fact, because it is heated from within and is so large, some modern astronomers now class Jupiter as a brown dwarf star rather than a planet. That doesn't mean we'll have nowhere to stand, though! Zarok's domain is larger than all the other planetary Incarnae and their moons put together, and almost resembles a miniature solar system itself due to the many moons that surround the outer realm. Zarok refers to the moons as his royal court.

That giant red spot you can probably see is an enormous hurricane that has raged for centuries. By itself the storm encompasses more area than the entire Earth and is like a depression in the cloudy area, almost like a funnel if seen from the top. There has been much speculation on what the storm's purpose is (beyond giving Zarok bragging rights for yet another "biggest of" something), but now, some suspect that it may contain a key that will help us defeat the Red Star. Others claim that its purpose is to swallow up and digest the Red Star when it comes too close, like the Fenris wolf swallowing the sun in old Norse tales.

This stop is far different than those we've experienced before. For the first time, you must maneuver and travel on a world mostly composed of air. Rather than touching down onto solid land, we will travel the air trails that lead to various regions of the Incarna's realm. Were we to attempt to visit the earthly planet, the pressure would crush us, but here in the Aetherial Realm we need not worry about that. Each of the stripes or bands you saw from a distance is a different zone or belt. Zones are darker, cooler regions, while belts are lighter in color and hotter. In the earthly realm, many of those bands lie at different elevations. I don't profess to know the real difference between a belt and a zone, but Zarok believes there to be a vast difference and I feel no need to argue with the Incarna in his own realm. Don't bother asking him to define the difference either. The answer I got on my last visit included direction of flow, air quality, components and the

individual auras and unique patterns of thought each belt or zone contained. I'm... content being unable to see the different colors and feeling when I cross from one to another by the relative temperature.

In any case, despite the variance in color and temperature, one belt is much like its neighboring zone and I didn't find any of them to be particularly noteworthy. Lots of swirling and storms, but not much content. It seems the patron of the Silver Fangs contents himself with being the largest (largest *what* he doesn't say) and pays little heed to making each realm into something amusing, dangerous or different in such a fashion that regular Garou can take note of it. In this case, the sum of the parts is not greater than the whole. Then again, perhaps the grand design is too vast for me to comprehend. I find myself wishing that the color bands were decorations or curtains hiding what lies beneath, as in Mitanu's realm where the apparently forbidding landscape is a clever covering over lovely regions below it. Perhaps I am being unfair, however. Mitanu actually has a goodly portion of solid material to work with while Zarok must make do with air.

Despite the fact that we have been all but flying during these past days, we have usually been on star roads or carried along by solar winds. Now we must truly fly, dependent on nothing more than ourselves. This makes us subject to air currents within the realm, which can become problematical.

We've all gotten used to matching ourselves to the various realms' rotations. Once upon them, we don't usually feel as if we're whizzing through space at a phenomenal rate. Here we do, or rather, we can. That's because Zarok's domain doesn't really rotate like a solid body at all. The air currents in each region move at their own rate, as does the Great Red Spot. We can attune ourselves to any given rotational speed, but that means we are no longer in sync with another band that might be right next door. This only really causes difficulties when you're trying to get back to a specific place, but we will want to settle in a particular area since Zarok prefers that we do, so we must consider this.

Think of it like this: we make our encampment by claiming a certain space within a pale pink belt. We leave a fetish there and perhaps some supplies or other things we've acquired on our journey. We then move into a brown zone where we meet with the Incarna. We don't notice that the two zones move at different speeds, because it isn't like moving from a slower conveyer belt to a faster one. It's a matter of crossing from one band onto a specific spot in the second band, the spot that happens to be opposite the area we are leaving *at that exact moment*. There might be a problem if we tried to straddle the two bands. Imagine the resulting split, as one leg moves away from the other at a much faster rate. Ouch.

Now, consider. We've had our meeting with the Incarna. It may have taken an hour. We return to the spot where we crossed into the brown zone, having noted unique, unchanging features of the region when first we crossed over since we didn't want to get lost. But there's a problem. Just

## Zarok as Totem

### Background Cost: 9

The kingly Zarok is proud to lend a portion of his magnificence to packs who prove worthy. However, he is unlikely to do so unless convinced that the pack is well-respected among its peers; the presence of a Silver Fang among them is always helpful toward this end.

**Traits:** Each member of Zarok's pack gains an effective level of Pure Breed when dealing with other Garou. The pack gains four additional dice in Leadership, and two additional dice in Intimidation. The pack may also draw on five additional points of Willpower per story. Finally, each one of Zarok's children gains an extra point of Willpower for purposes of resisting external domination, mind control or intimidation.

**Ban:** Zarok's children are not allowed to dishonor themselves. Any action which would lead to a loss of Honor Renown will cause Zarok to abandon the pack.

across the border in the pink belt, the landmark (if you'll pardon the term) we noted so we could find our way back isn't there anymore! See, the brown zone has a rotation of five and a half hours, while the pink belt takes eleven hours to make the same rotation. We're now facing onto a completely different area of the pink than the one we left an hour or so ago. We can try to run or fly backwards within the brown zone, hoping to guess the approximate location and looking like crazy for our familiar marks or we can wait several hours right here hoping we'll catch up to and again pass the spot we're searching for. We won't even go into the idea that the campsite itself is subject to some drifting from the air currents — after all, it's not like it's set on solid land.

Nonetheless, the Incarna can form the air into more solid shapes when he chooses. As Zarok is magnanimous, he usually takes some pity on visitors and creates areas in which land-dwellers can feel more comfortable. Besides, I think he likes to create a big impression — fancy thrones, silk banners, colorful tapestries — and it's hard to do that with swirling air. So, despite some of the inconveniences, once we remind Zarok that we need a touch more stability, we'll have it a little easier here. At our first meeting with him, we can request that he create a zone of solidity for us. Some visitors feel more secure sleeping on a solid surface; for myself, I prefer the comfort of clouds, but I certainly don't mind some sort of tether to make sure I don't drift away. I'd hate to drift into the Great Red Spot and become subject to its hurricane winds.

As I remember, Zarok is large and robust, with ruddy skin. His silver hair and beard are thick and curly and his frosty blue eyes wreathed with laugh lines. His expression shows his authority and dignity. Zarok dresses in colorful robes of state with a full-length cloak of white wolf fur. He is never without some sort of crown, whether an actual gold crown inset with gemstones or a crowning aura of light. He

much enjoyed appearing along with the trappings due a monarch — a huge throne, apparently made of carnelian, and a golden scepter topped with rubies and an enormous diamond. He also assumed the form of an immense silver-white wolf with ice blue eyes, and the appearance of an enormous white hawk.

Jovial and kind, Zarok always welcomes visitors who come in the spirit of friendship and mirth. He enjoys company and likes to grant his visitors gifts. This is not to say that Zarok doesn't possess a serious side. He is, after all, a ruler and patron of Philodox. Rulers must sometimes make difficult decisions and his wisdom is as evident as his humor. Because of his congenial and generous nature, however, many tend to underestimate Zarok, seeing him as little more than a pompous buffoon drunk on his own size. Those fools have never seen the Crowned One explode into bombastic rage. There is little more terrifying than to experience Zarok in anger — immense, towering, majestically strong and utterly unstoppable. Many discovered this to their ruin in the near past when a mere *portion* of this great Incarna's power was unleashed in the physical realm in the city of Chicago. The city barely withstood his power. Let us hope that the Red Star does not cross over into the physical realm and force the other Incarnae to confront it there. I could not begin to imagine the devastation that would ensue if that were to happen.

## Zarok's Grand Court

When we visit the Incarna we will travel to his court. In a realm of gigantic proportions, Zarok's Court holds its own. Seen from a distance, the Grand Court rises from the clouds like an illusion, its colorful domed towers blending in with the swirling eddies around it until we are quite close. I can still see it in my mind's eye — orange, red, pale yellow and pink — the bulbous gold crowned domes rise atop slender towers framing beautifully worked stone walls and carved doors set with gemstones. The entire structure is sized for giants. Arched windows taller than the Eiffel Tower seem filled with stained glass depictions of storms and roiling winds. As we approach, we shall hear a deep, sonorous bell tolling solemnly, announcing our arrival. The smell of rich, fragrant incense fills the air and draws us inside as the ponderous doors swing open silently to admit us. We are like ants before the sheer overpowering immensity of the structure.

Before us stretches a hall, mirrored on both sides to reflect the supporting columns and we tiny petitioners as we traverse its miles long length toward Zarok's throne. Pale light from crystals set into the walls illuminates our way, leading us unerringly down the center of a hall that is wider than a football field is long. Ahead, beyond an intimidatingly long red carpet rise three broad, marble steps higher than our heads. Atop them, crowned with golden light and seated on his throne waits Zarok. Surrounding him wait beautifully dressed men and women and several large animals — a wolf, an albino eagle and a glowing, golden-hoofed horse. He acknowledges them as his royal court and points out a few of

## Dangers of the Realm

The main danger in Zarok's realm is not a physical threat, but the intrigue among his court members. These servitor spirits have grandiose plans. The court consists of the sixteen satellites that orbit the planet: the spirits of Callisto, Ganymede, Europa, Io, Adrastea, Amalthea, Thebe, Leda, Himalia, Lysithea, Elara, Ananke, Carme, Pasiphae, Sinope and Metis. (These are not necessarily the spirits' only names; Storytellers should feel free to craft their own names for Zarok's hangers-on.)

All these courtiers know that Zarok is not merely another planet, but a small brown dwarf (a star that never achieved enough mass, then contracted enough to turn on its nuclear furnace). Rather than viewing their liege as a star that failed, however, his court sees him as a star that might potentially *become*. Many of them are tired of Katanka-Sonnak's position in the hierarchy of Incarnae and believe that if they could capture and use the Red Star's energy, they might light Zarok's fuse. Then they themselves would become planets rather than merely moons. Since many of them are larger than some of the other planets, they do seem to have a point. Others among the court realize what sheer folly this would be, but their warnings have failed to interest the Incarna, who dismisses it as foolish jockeying for position. It's unclear (i.e. Storyteller's choice) whether Zarok actually agrees with and fosters his courtiers' designs or if he is simply too indulgent and unwilling to admit his mistake in housing his spirit minions in such mighty physical forms so that they can keep him company and fawn on him.

The conspirators will want to make use of the Garou visitors and try to involve them in the scheme. It's up to the characters to determine who's who (it's not always clear whether a supposed conspirator is for real or a spy for the other side and vice versa) and find a way to stop them before it's too late. Should their plot succeed, Zarok would assume his place as another sun in the Aetherial Realm, and the planet Jupiter in the physical realm might also burst into being as a star, making it a binary solar system. Never mind that the exploding energy of the birth of a new star would destroy the Earth and several other planets as well and would undoubtedly pulverize and disintegrate the very satellites who plot their lord's ascendance. If things can be put right in the Umbra, perhaps the physical world itself can be shaped into an appropriate form.

Storytellers interested in pursuing this plotline should acquire information on Jupiter's moons and use it to customize these personalities. A scenario thrusting Garou into the sort of vicious intrigues and maneuverings of courtiers might make a welcome change from some of the more physical games.



them, Callisto, Ganymede, Europa, Io and others. (Interestingly, one of his court is named Metis, but it seems to be a similarity of name and nothing more.)

By now, visitors might well feel dispirited and insignificant, yet strangely, as we move closer, either we seem to grow or the hall to shrink until we are not the size of ants, but merely smaller than the Incarna and his spirit minions. It becomes far easier to interact with all of them once we are of sufficient size. The Incarna likes to hear stories travelers bring him and is more than willing to be hospitable and generous in return for entertainment and philosophical discussions. He is quite likely to teach us Gifts such as Proclamation of Action or give us a fetish or talen to commemorate our visit. As long as we show him the proper deference, Zarok is one of the most even-tempered and congenial of the Incarnae. The same cannot always be said of his court.

Once we have concluded our sojourn in Zarok's domain, we move onward to that of Lu-Bat, his neighbor.

## *Lu-Bat* *Incarna of Saturn*

Once we move beyond Zarok's Court, we can easily see Lu-Bat and his glorious rings. The Peaceful Counselor corresponds to the planet Saturn and is the second largest of the Incarnae. Though all the gas giants in the system have some rings, Lu-Bat's are the largest and most spectacular, glowing against the darkened sky. While they look as though they are divided only into a couple of broad rings with gaps in between, they are actually several separate rings with two main divisions. In the earthly realm, these are made up of ice chunks, rock, balls of snow (from house sized down to minuscule dots) and ice crystals. They circle like a snowstorm of semi-solid snowflakes around the body of the planet. Here, most are Lu-Bat's Jagglings. They ring the planet's equator, making it possible for us to avoid them altogether for the moment. After passing over approximately half of them, though, we must go among them to greet the Incarna.

Though I can no longer enjoy their beauty, I still find pleasure in Lu-Bat's rings because they restore my faith in the Wyld and the unknowable triumphing over cold, hard science and the Weaver. According to physics, all the rings should move in an exact circle around the planet. Some don't, though. Further, some of the rings overlap each other and end up in a braided pattern — something the laws of physics say should be impossible. I suppose nobody told Lu-Bat. Along with his rings, the Peaceful Counselor also has a number of moons and satellites, the most in the system. Unlike Zarok, Lu-Bat has not granted his spirit minions the right to his moons.

Those of you who like the taste of your own adrenaline are welcome to "ride the rings." Lu-Bat understands that there must be outlets for aggression and boredom and gives his permission for any of us to synchronize our movement with one of the outer rings and hop on. While it sounds relatively easy, once aboard, it's like riding a skateboard on a roller coaster track

## *Riding the Rings*

While it requires only a simple Dexterity roll and one success to leap onto a ring as it passes, remaining atop the ring is a different matter. Bucking and swaying as it moves along, the ring also consists of myriad small particles. While they all move roughly together, the operative word is "rough." It's like trying to stand on a bucking bronco with no rope to hang onto. Garou who attempt to ride the rings must roll Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 8) to remain standing. Such rolls are necessary every few minutes. In between balance rolls, the characters should have to leap or sidestep some of the larger pieces or be run down by them (since larger pieces of the ring rotate at slightly different rates). Some Garou may contrive games such as ring races to play. Anyone failing a balance roll, falls down and may be subject to being run over or hit by a larger piece of the ring, sustaining six dice of damage. While such damage is non-aggravated, it might knock the Garou silly for a few minutes and leave him subject to even more encounters with large debris. Those who botch fall, taking six health levels of damage as they partially slip through the ring itself and are also subject to one smashing encounter from a larger piece of icy rock.

## *Lu-Bat as Totem*

### **Background Cost:** 10

Lu-Bat has been known to serve as a totem of Wisdom if properly approached, although he often refuses such requests. He prefers that Garou find their own way and make their own decisions, and will only act as a pack's patron if convinced that the pack will not use him as a crutch.

**Traits:** Lu-Bat grants an understanding of riddles and the hearts of others; his children make all Enigmas, Empathy and Occult rolls at -2 difficulty. The Peaceful Counselor also grants each of his children an additional point of Perception and two points of temporary Wisdom.

**Ban:** Children of Lu-Bat are not allowed to act hastily; his packs must always have a backup plan for every major endeavor they attempt.

or trying to surf a tsunami. It isn't easy, but it's fun and dangerous, a combination many of our kind find irresistible.

Despite his size, Lu-Bat is a relative lightweight. True, the planet weighs about 95 times as much as Eshtarra, but that weight is distributed over such a large area that if we could find a body of water large enough to contain it, Lu-Bat would float. Accordingly, its gravity is only a little more than Eshtarra's. Again, it is mainly a gaseous world, but we will not have the same difficulties we experienced with Zarok's realm. Although Lu-Bat maintains his own dwelling



on the actual planetary surface, he meets with visitors among the rings. Within the smaller division among the rings rests a small moon. Knowing that many of those who would travel to his realm are used to solid structures, Lu-Bat has chosen this spot to construct his Council Hall. Here we will find comfortable quarters where we may stay during our visit. While there, we may interact with emissaries from all the totems of Wisdom, who act as ambassadors to the Incarna and take counsel with him.

On my first visit it seemed to me that Lu-Bat himself seemed unimpressive after encountering Zarok. I later reassessed my initial reaction. The Incarna makes no attempt to compete with his grandiose neighbor, nor does he try to prove anything. Instead, he appears quite normal, even understated. While he can assume the form of a smallish gray wolf, a snowy owl and a luminous moth-winged being, he rarely does so, preferring a simpler human form. He appears to be a slightly older man of average height with dark skin, friendly brown eyes, and dark hair worn braided in front and loose behind his back. His attire is a simple long jacket over loose trousers, usually of a pale saffron color, and he wears unornamented slippers. His turban is small and fastened with a single greenish-brown stone. The Incarna smiles easily and appears relaxed and at peace with himself and others. Lu-Bat is the greatest advocate for peace and cooperation among the Incarnae, which isn't terribly surprising in one who acts as

patron of the Children of Gaia. It often surprises others that he also represents the Ragabash, though.

Those who cannot figure out how such a composed, quiet Incarna can be patron to the Ragabash do not fully understand the nature of our oftentimes prankster brethren. Lu-Bat speaks to that element of the Ragabash that many never acknowledge, which is to find joy and acceptance in things as they are while urging us to try new things. While it may be strange to think of a patron of the Ragabash being known as the "Steady One," we should remember that even tricksters have to have a centered portion of themselves—and an innate understanding of others—from which their humor arises.

Lu-Bat's main strength lies in that understanding. Where others may waste themselves in futile battle against foes or in ferreting out some hidden secret that will give them the advantage, Lu-Bat listens with his heart to what the words and actions of others tell him about them. He then treats with them from the position of knowing what is important to them and what they need to hear. This is not to say that Lu-Bat is totally pacifistic, merely that he resorts to violence last after he has exhausted other possibilities. That in itself makes him a formidable opponent and worthy of great respect. That he has the attention and cooperation of many, many Star-spirits and totems as well as most of the other Incarnae makes him powerful indeed.

## *Dangers of the Realm*

Although there exists some danger from the rings, only those who choose to attempt riding them are affected by it. Lu-Bat takes great care that no one actually travels to the planetary portion of his realm, where other dangers may exist. Storytellers who wish to detail those dangers may do so if it enhances their chronicles.

The chief danger in Lu-Bat's realm comes from its very nature. Those who live lives of strife, frustration, Rage and battle may find the peace of the Incarna's realm overwhelming. Given time for reflection and contemplation in an atmosphere of drowsy quiet, some Garou fall into a state of complacency and laziness they cannot seem to break. Despite the werewolves' violent nature, there is always some spark of longing for exactly the sort of resting-place that Lu-Bat's domain provides. It is a haven from cares, a shelter against the eternal war the Garou must wage on Gaia's behalf. From providing a much-needed lull in the battle, it can easily become a crippling haven Garou become reluctant to leave. It's far easier to bask in contentment and engage in philosophical discussion than to throw oneself back into red, raging battle against the Wyrms. Garou who show any inclination toward relaxing completely during their stay in Lu-Bat's realm may enter this state where they lack the will to leave, undergoing a sort of weird post-traumatic shock disorder in which they willfully refuse to remember there are dangers elsewhere they have a duty to fight. The Storyteller should require players whose characters seem to respond in such a manner to the realm to make a Willpower roll (difficulty 9) to agree to leave it. Even if such characters manage to depart, they are at -1 to all tasks until they spend Rage in a battle of some sort. This reflects their lingering desire for the peaceful kingdom of Lu-Bat.

Should we speak with him concerning the Red Star, it is possible he may have some particularly noteworthy insights into its motives and possible actions. Lu-Bat may offer us counsel as well as teach us Gifts or bestow fetishes or talens upon us if we appear to need such or please him with our discussions.

As we move toward the moon where we are to meet with the Incarna, you will see brilliant sunlight reflecting off the millions of ice particles within the rings, lighting our way to the Council Hall.

### *Lu-Bat's Council Hall*

Looking as though it were raised up out of the moon's material and shaped to fit its purpose as an afterthought, Lu-Bat's Council Hall folds into, rather than dominates, the landscape. Unless you were specifically looking for it, you might miss it altogether or dismiss it as just another hill. Only by looking closely can you see the door and window openings. Just inside the main entryway lies a large oval hall

from which several passages radiate like the spokes of a wheel. We will be given rooms along one of these wings. I remember the quarters as being pleasant but not overly grand. Each looks out on to a scene of the rings, however, a breathtaking view for those who can enjoy it. I can just hear the faint, soporific sound of their continual whirring as they move past us and can imagine them again as I first saw them.

Pleasant, calming scents perfume the air here, reminiscent of sandalwood or amber and underlying the sound of the rings, soft tones of music float through the air, sounding briefly, then gradually fading away to be replaced by another tone. As I remember it the lighting in the hall partially reflects the sun-warmed bronze yellow of the rings, but there exists a greenish undertone to it as well that promotes harmony. Now I simply feel its warm kiss on my skin.

The room where Lu-Bat's council meets opens outward from the entry hall and is itself circular. Central to the hall is a lower area where those who wish to speak in council gather and seat themselves upon comfortable cushions. The Incarna generally takes a central cushion and acts as facilitator for the council meeting. Radiating outward from the central bowl are rows and tiers of risers, each cushioned and slightly higher than the next one down so that all may have a view of the proceedings. Like a Greek amphitheater, the acoustics are so fine that a whisper from the council bowl can be clearly heard in the highest tier seats. Here, no secrets may be whispered without all being privy to them. For this reason, some of the less open Incarnae refuse to meet together in Lu-Bat's Council Hall, fearing their secrets may inadvertently be betrayed there.

From the quiet and reflective domain of Lu-Bat we now journey to the enigmatic realm of Ruatma.

## *Ruatma* *Incarna of Uranus*

As we follow the star road to Ruatma's realm, you may notice that it becomes more fluid in nature until we are actually moving along through water. Though at first it feels odd, you'll find that we can traverse it as easily as our normal paths. I've always wondered if this is Ruatma's and Shantar's way of preparing us for their realms. I feel the pull of Ruatma's realm already, so I am certain you can see it ahead of us. Many who observe the Shadowed One feel frustrated at its blandness. I used to enjoy seeing its cool, pale blue green surface framed against the blackness. Although more difficult to make out than Lu-Bat's glorious showcases, Ruatma also has a ring. I have heard that the planet's atmosphere extends up into the ring and it is slowly disintegrating, however.

Ruatma corresponds to the planet Uranus, the least understood and most mysterious of all those in the system. His unchanging featurelessness, which hides whatever lies below it, seems appropriate for one who is patron to the Shadow Lords and Theurges. Ruatma is a watery world in the earthly realm. It consists of a simple rock core, water and



## *Dangers of the Realm*

Ruatma has taken great pains to make certain there are no overt dangers in "his" domain. The last thing the Incarna wants is to attract unwanted attention to her hidden world. While this makes travelers less likely to be attacked, it also makes a journey to the world a trifle boring for heavy action types. Here, there are no physical threats — at least, not initially. The only real danger in the domain is Ruatma.

The Incarna possesses secret prophecies regarding both the metis child and the Red Star, prophecies she has not shared with the other Incarnae. These indicate that the fate of the child and the star are somehow linked. According to her studies, Ruatma has uncovered evidence that leads her to believe that the child will (with the right guidance, of course) become an entity known as the Shadow Queen.

While she wishes no real harm to come to Gaia, Ruatma wants to become more important in the scheme of things. She sees her road to doing this by becoming the guardian, teacher and advisor to the metis child. Ruatma sees no treachery in this; she feels it only fair that she should take what is due her. Any advice she may offer to the characters beyond leaving the child in her care is false no matter how useful it might actually be. She is simply setting them up to trust her and eventually turn the child over to her. At some point during their visit, Ruatma may approach one or more of the characters to sound them out about the wisdom of entrusting the child to her. She points out that she can hide the child better than any other Incarna and also educate the child from her own vast store of arcane knowledge. Some characters may even feel that the Incarna is right (and she is, up to a point, the problem is her ambition to become the power behind the throne).

If she cannot convince the characters to support her, however, Ruatma will not want them going anywhere they

might blab what they know to anyone else. She orders her sentinels to imprison the characters further back in the caverns and to keep them from escaping by any means short of killing them. Ruatma does not truly want to slay the characters, as she knows they are Gaia's defenders, she simply wants more time to persuade them that she is right. The characters will not be mistreated, simply held against their will. They can escape the situation either by waiting until Ruatma turns her attention elsewhere and defeating the sentinels who guard their cell or by convincing the Incarna they have come around to her way of thinking (not so easy, but a possibility).

To fool the Incarna, the character must make a Manipulation + Subterfuge roll (difficulty 10). A single success will cause Ruatma to experience doubt and she'll become more inclined to believe the character's sincerity. Four more rolls total are needed over a period of time in order to convince the Incarna completely. Each is at one degree less difficulty than the last so long as the roll succeeds (i.e. the second roll is at 9, the third at 8, etc.). If any of these rolls are flubbed, the difficulty rises to its former level and the character must begin again. Once she believes that a character supports her plans, Ruatma frees him. If any roll is ever botched, Ruatma catches on to what that character is trying to do. She will not speak with the character again, instead instructing the sentinels to provide for his needs, but not to let him escape under any circumstances. Other characters who have gained the Shadowed One's trust may have to assist such a character to escape. Once free of Ruatma's realm, regardless of what they know, the Incarna does not pursue them, preferring to hide herself ever more thoroughly and trust that others won't believe the characters.

atmosphere. It lies tipped over on its side by over 90 degrees, meaning that one of its poles faces the sun, then its side, then its other pole and so on. The planet rotates in retrograde motion — the opposite direction from most of the other planets. Here in the Aetherial, it remains much the same, which causes its moons to orbit in odd patterns. When one of the poles faces the sun, the moons circle in concentric rings as if creating a giant target with the planet as a bullseye. When it is side-on, the moons travel around the equator in a vertical fashion, traveling up and over, down and around. When the other pole faces the sun, it reverts to its target pattern, but the moons circle in the opposite direction. All this change in the moons tends to attract attention to *them* rather than to the planet, which seems bland and uninteresting in comparison. This makes the Incarna quite happy. He likes nothing better than obfuscation and distraction that allows him to keep his true depths hidden.

While we can touch down on some of the moons, we will find nothing to interest us there. I don't mean there are no structures there; in fact, the opposite is true. Scattered about the moons lie ancient ruins, intriguing alien-looking structures, weird rune-covered obelisks and enticing underground bunkers. I think the Incarna counts on those who are most familiar with solid land to be distracted by these and stop to investigate them. Inside rest dozens of odd items that seem as though they should do something, yet they cannot be made to function. Strangely shaped furnishings complete the image of an alien community's outpost that has been inexplicably abandoned. In fact, it all means nothing. If we feel more comfortable on dry land, the Incarna won't stop us from staying in one of the buildings for a time, so I suppose they serve a purpose after all.

The Shadowed One's true lair lies within the depths of his blue-green sea, a planet-sized ocean on a planet over five times the size of Earth. It should come as no surprise that if

## Ruatma as Totem

The Shadowed One may grant supplicants one or two of her secrets, but is unwilling to make long-term promises of patronage. Ruatma is not available as a pack or personal totem.

Ruatma wants to be left in peace, visitors have little choice in the matter. Should he not wish to see us, Ruatma can remain hidden indefinitely. Even should we search his entire realm, there would be no guarantee that we'd find anything. Luckily, the Incarna himself is a curious sort. He does not like to share his own secrets, but loves to learn those of others. If we come directly into the watery depths of his domain and make ourselves at home, he will eventually approach us to learn why we are here. We need not worry about the storms and swirling waters hidden by the bland blue atmosphere. Ruatma has no need to make his realm difficult for travelers; he merely makes it obscure.

I do admit to feeling a little odd moving through icy water as though walking atop the clouds near the spirit orrery. Many visitors find that they cannot overcome the feeling that if they breathe in the water, they will drown — despite not needing to breathe in several other parts of the Aetherial. Logic has nothing to do with it. After all, it is entirely illogical that we cling to physical limitations at all. Nonetheless, we must adhere to *some* familiar practices or lose our sense of ourselves. To that extent we are creatures of habit. If you really want to fasten on the strangeness of it consider this: we are far from Katanka-Sonnak's heat and Ruatma has little of its own. This "water" we travel through is actually over 150 degrees below zero. Still, it's unnerving to enter a seemingly endless, featureless sea and await the Incarna's interest. Once we gain his attention, he will lead us to a vast underwater cavern where he prefers to meet with those who enter his realm peaceably.

The Incarna himself is as enigmatic as his realm. I have only ever seen him in one form. He appeared as quasi-human, draped and hooded within the folds of a voluminous blue cloak. Like his watery domain, it was pale blue and without ornamentation. Though his form was vaguely humanlike, he seemed far too tall and stretched. I could not make out his hair for certain since it was tucked within the folds of the hood, but I got the impression it was blue-black in color. What I could see of his eyes reflected like the glitter of light on dark waters. His fingers were long and slender and there seemed to be too many of them. But I most remember his voice. It was a whisper, soft yet firm, and seemed to carry within his intonations the feeling that he held secrets at his fingertips that he could share if he wished — or withhold forever.

Ruatma is mainly interested in visitors because they may bring him information he does not already possess. He may be willing to trade on a one-for-one basis. It little matters to the Shadowed One that his information may be a Gift or the secrets to an ancient rite while ours may be nothing more than news of our travels or gossip concerning another Incarna. I



## *The Real Ruatma*

Although Ruatma is always referred to as male, the Incarna is, in fact, a female spirit. She allows others to perceive her as male because she understands that even among higher beings, there exists prejudice that equates the male principle with strength, stamina, ability, greater tactical knowledge and even higher intelligence and the ability to keep secrets. She knows that the Shadow Lords would have less respect for her, as would many of the more traditional Theurges if they knew, so she simply doesn't tell them. Should anyone uncover her secret before she is ready to reveal it, she might be tempted to incarcerate him (as she does those who discover her other plans). For now, the Shadowed One remains the greatest mystery of her realm.

have long suspected that every bit of news he gathers he relates to other bits of knowledge and thereby receives a much larger picture than any single bit could give him by itself. If he is particularly pleased by what we have to say, he might even be induced to part with a fetish or talen, though he usually requires some sort of service or quest to do so.

## *Ruatma's Shadowed Caverns*

Though the realm seems featureless to us, Ruatma himself knows it intimately and will lead us to the caverns. We must simply trust him, for we can barely tell up from down, east from west in this murky realm. I don't recall as much as I might about the caverns, for I felt very intimidated when I visited before. After swimming for what seemed like days, ever downward, changing direction seemingly at random, we arrived at the opening to Ruatma's stronghold. The interior was barely visible due to the heavy shadows, which began just beyond the entryway. Ruatma provided us with small globes of some pinkish substance that glowed feebly. They illuminated the way just enough for us to see where we were stepping, but no real details of floor, ceiling or walls. Once within, we followed what seemed to be a natural cavern into an even larger cave. Here Ruatma seated himself upon a throne that looked as if it were carved from aquamarine and gathered his cloak about himself so that all his features were hidden. Only after we had been there for some little while and our eyes adjusted did I notice all the silent sentinels, spirit beings apparently made of water and matching the coloration exactly.

We were expected to tell the Incarna things he didn't know. Occasionally, he would voice a question or ask about other subjects. We often had no knowledge of the subjects he requested. In return, we were allowed to ask for his knowledge. Most questions he instructed one or another of the sentinels to answer, but once or twice he himself answered. I have no idea how complete his answers were, but I always felt that he could have told us more had he wished to. When that single interview was finished, he dismissed us,

instructing a sentinel to lead us again to the surface and see that we were comfortable. He told us we could remain in his realm if we wished, but that he would not meet with us again until we had more information to impart. I fervently hope that what we have learned from the other Incarna and what we know of events in the world will be enough to purchase what he knows of the Red Star!

Once out of Ruatma's murky domain, we move to another watery world, but Shantar is vastly different.

## *Shantar* *Incarna of Neptune*

Another giant awaits us as we approach the outer range of the inner Aetherial system, though it is the smallest of the four. Like Ruatma, Shantar is a water world. Unlike it, the planetary Incarna who corresponds to Neptune seems like an old friend to visitors from Earth. Sometimes called the "other" dark blue planet, Shantar can evoke such nostalgia. Like the Earth, from a distance she too shows wispy white clouds above her deep cerulean ocean. The illusion shatters as we move closer and you can see that there are no corresponding green and brown land formations.

Again, we must travel through a watery environment to meet with the Incarna, and again that water is well below freezing in the physical world. We move through it because Shantar allows us to and protects us from the frigid temperature that prevails here. We are not protected from the storm systems that move across Shantar's equator. Like the Great Red Spot on Zarok, Shantar possesses a Great Dark Spot framed by shining white clouds. It too is as large as the Earth and flows around the planet in the opposite direction from Shantar's rotation. Shantar's hurricane beats out Zarok's in terms of sheer force, however, with winds ten times those of such storms on Earth. So, anyone with foolish ideas about

## *Shantar as Totem*

### **Background Cost: 8**

Although the Loom Maker is somewhat alien by human standards, she is relatively approachable as a pack totem. If a pack is willing to go to the trouble to reach her and ask her favor, she usually agrees (providing there are no knee-jerk anti-Weaver crusaders among the pack).

**Traits:** Shantar encourages her children to be creative and inventive. The pack receives two extra dice on Repair, Crafts and Computer rolls. Furthermore, Glass Walker Gifts cost one less experience point to learn for Shantar's children. Finally, each of Shantar's children gain one extra die to any swimming rolls, or any rolls made to navigate the Weaver's Webs.

**Ban:** The Loom Maker charges her children to heal rather than harm when dealing with the Weaver. She often gives her packs dangerous quests to cut Wyrms-influence away from the Webs.





trying to brave the storm can imagine himself torn asunder by 1000 mile-an-hour winds. Not that I believe ranked veterans like you would do so, but you'd be appalled by what pups will try in the name of glory.

I always fancy I can hear the roar of the sea as we come within Shantar's domain, but the Glass Walkers, who claim Shantar as their patron, would tell you it is the sound of Shantar's Loom. As the Incarna also acts as patron for the Philodox, I will leave the argument in their hands and keep my own opinions. Other smaller storm systems become apparent as we near the planet as does its own ring system and moons. Though they might be fun to explore another time, we go now to the main planet. Don't worry, Shantar is nothing if not inventive. She provides unique quarters for those land creatures who visit her realms.

I cannot see it, but do you notice that shimmer in the waters ahead? That is one of Shantar's floating islands. It isn't strictly an island since it too is composed of water, but she has compressed the water into shapes and forms and partially solidified it for us. It has the same coloration as everything else around it, even appearing transparent when you look through it, but she has given us beds and blankets, tables and chairs, even places to store some of the items we've received elsewhere. Should we wish it, the Incarna can provide food for us the same way. I can't tell you how amusing it is to eat something that looks like a soft, transparent water-filled pillow and have it taste like fresh venison or strawberries.

The last time I visited her realm, she even created a castle from water so that we would feel secure while we met with her. It rose from the surrounding water, with turrets and crenellations, its own moat separated from the rest of the water by being raised above it slightly, a drawbridge and a great courtyard where we met the Incarna. I have heard a tale that since then she has updated her design and last met with a septmate of mine and his Glass Walker friend in an ultra-modern high rise complete with waterspout-driven elevators. She seems to enjoy creating these objects for us, which is not too surprising since she is noted for her invention.

Shantar herself has enough that is "human" about her that we can relate to her, but appears the least like us of the Incarnae. Though she is not bombastic and gigantic like Zarok, Shantar is large — over nine feet tall — though she could probably make herself larger or smaller if she chose. She has blue skin, almost the color of her oceans, with darker blue hair and eyes. The hair is singularly similar to seaweed and the Incarna's skin shows fine lines like faint scale patterns. She has four arms, which seem always in motion — gesturing, holding something or working on some new invention. Her face is quite pointed and her nose more like slits under a bony ridge. From the waist down she appears to be a twisted spout of blue water, swirled with white. I can only imagine what her wolf form, should she choose to take one, would be! Despite the similarity to a waterspout, her presence does not churn the waters nearby or cause any difficulties for those in her pres-

## *Dangers of the Realm*

Because Shantar is a proponent of the Weaver, she has allowed her Penumbra to touch upon the Weaver's Aetherial domain and occasionally Weaver-spirits come through into her realm. Attracted to constructed items, these spirits may converge on the shelter built for the characters or on some other place the characters have gathered. The characters are probably aware of how Shantar feels about the Weaver and may be reluctant to confront these spirits lest they insult the Incarna. Until they do, however, the spirits run rampant, calcifying whatever they touch and binding it in Weaver webs. This might include some of the characters if they aren't careful. Certainly, should a character leave anything in his quarters, he will return to find it enmeshed in webs and must fight to retrieve it. The good news is that while Shantar wants to heal and restore the Weaver, she doesn't necessarily want Weaver-spirits running about her domain. She will not be angry with characters who dispatch the Weaver spirits or who find some way to drive or lure them back to their own realm.

### • Weaver Taint

Of greater danger than the spirits is a trap the characters may already have fallen into. As they travel throughout the inner system of the Aetherial Realm and meet with the planetary Incarna, they are quite likely to receive or earn special items — fetishes and talens. Some may even have used them and found that they enjoy having such extra power. And this is the trap. When they begin depending on *things* rather than themselves, the Garou may become more complacent and certain they can overcome just about anything. At some point during their stay, Shantar will ask each character secretly what item he would most like to have made for him.

The correct answer lies somewhere between something that allows the Garou to help others and saying that he already has many powerful items and doesn't want to

be greedy. In such a case, Shantar will try to oblige the character to some degree, perhaps giving him a talen or revealing where he might find something similar somewhere else (in effect giving him the chance to quest for it). If the Garou wants something to increase his own power, however, there is the danger that he has teetered too close to the Weaver and been caught by acquisitiveness and a selfish desire for power. The character must make a roll on Manipulation + Science (difficulty 8) and achieve two successes or fall into a state of Weaver Taint. (Please note that this is an affliction, not necessarily the same as Weaver-taint, which is the mere situation of having the "smell of the Weaver" to oneself.)

Those affected by Weaver Taint cannot take any action without needing an item to help them. In effect, they need the assurance that the item gives them that they can succeed at whatever it is they attempt. The item is a crutch propping them up and giving them confidence. Take away the item and the character feels helpless. Unfortunately, the only cure for Weaver Taint is to remove every item, fetish, talen and object from the character and force him into an immediate battle. Since he will undoubtedly go nearly berserk at the thought of someone else taking his precious items, the fight isn't too hard to bring about. Stripping the character of all items can prove dangerous in and of itself. False legs replacing ones lost in battle or to a metis deformity are fair game, as are any other sorts of prosthetics. Removing a metal plate in someone's head placed there after a childhood accident may even endanger the Garou's life; certainly it would cause horrendous pain. During the battle, the stripped character must achieve at least one solid, damaging hit on his opponent without the use of any items in order to be cured. Once his mental aberration is healed, the character's items may be returned to him, but if he is wise, he will give some of them away at the earliest opportunity to avoid a repeat of this crippling mental illness.

ence. Although she incorporates water as part of her body, the Incarna doesn't appear wet any more than we do.

The Loom Maker enjoys interacting with visitors, particularly if they can show her anything she has never seen before — a new invention, a fetish she is unfamiliar with or even a tool of some sort. Visitors can definitely feel her affinity for the Weaver in her love of creativity, but she also maintains a distance from the Weaver's doings. Most of her planet remains untouched and her creations are intended to further Gaia's aims rather than conflict with them. Shantar does believe the Weaver has been unfairly condemned, though, and like the Glass Walkers she favors, the Loom Maker hopes to reclaim the Weaver and restore her to her rightful place in the Triat. She is philosophical enough to realize that many Garou do not feel this way, however. While she may try to convince us otherwise, she will forgive us if we continue to mistrust the Weaver. If we

do not offend her and make it clear we seek help for Gaia, she may offer us some of her creations or teach us Gifts.

Although she will create a shelter for us and has a stronghold, we will probably meet with the Loom Maker at her pool of wisdom. Be prepared; it may not be the Great Dark Spot, but it's close! I wondered last time if this was the Incarna's way of testing our bravery and our commitment. Perhaps it is.

## *Shantar's Pool of Wisdom*

This strange, deep blue eddy is less than a hurricane, but more than a whirlpool. It lies just outside Shantar's stronghold. We must cross through it at an angle that allows us to just skirt the edge, while turning our attention to the center, where the Incarna constructs her creations. Here she stores many of the items she has made as well as the plans for

constructing them and ideas on new objects. It is actually more like a workshop than anything else, albeit a strange one. You will simply have to trust me when I tell you that once Shantar tells us we may enter, we must immediately leap as far toward the center of the whirlpool as we can and be sucked down into her workspace.

It is fairly uncomfortable for a minute or so as we spiral down (which has raised a few eyebrows before due to its implications), but we emerge to a peaceful space where we may explore and interact with Shantar. She is quite willing to share her knowledge with those who possess both the desire and the aptitude. Again, everything she creates has the look of plastic bags stretched over blue colored water, but I can attest from experience that should the Incarna make you a gift of any item, it assumes a more normal appearance once outside her realm.

Those who prefer may speak with the Incarna concerning philosophy, Garou practices, the Litany and its origins, the Weaver's role in creation or anything else. Like Lu-Bat, Shantar is very open to any subject that is not directly detrimental to Gaia and the other Incarnae. It must be understood, however, that she is a staunch supporter of the Weaver—this disconcerts me at least, and be careful that you don't let it cause too much friction. Nevertheless, if we can curb our tongues, there is much that Shantar can teach us.

Beyond Shantar's realm, we have only one more Incarna to visit.

## Meros

### Incarna of Pluto

We are nearing the end of our journey. Ahead lies the sometimes-farthest planet of the inner Aetherial system. Meros is also the smallest, having a diameter that is roughly half the size of the United States. It is even smaller and lighter than Earth's moon, a fact that cheers Sokhta considerably. Corresponding to the planet Pluto in the earthly realm, Meros earns his title of the Wanderer. Where all the other planets revolve around the sun in roughly circular orbits, this restless Incarna takes up an erratic elliptical orbit that is also tilted, taking it out of the elliptic and sending it inside Shantar's orbit for years at a time. They don't clash together and Shantar doesn't capture Meros as a moon only because the timing of their journeys keeps them far away from one another. When Meros is inside Shantar's orbit, she is far away, underneath and down to one side of his orbit. Nonetheless, it isn't hard to imagine why some call Meros the Homeless One. As he is a patron to the Silent Striders, it seems appropriate.

Meros appears as a gray world with a few brownish-orange splotches and shining polar ice caps. From a distance,





## *Meros as Totem*

### **Background Cost: 7**

It is much more difficult for a pack to actually reach Meros to ask his patronage than it is to convince him of their worth. The wandering Incarna is usually willing to serve as patron to a pack, assuming that they understand all that entails.

**Traits:** Children of Meros find it easier to navigate the Dark Umbra; each one gains -1 difficulty to any die rolls dealing with the land of the dead or its inhabitants. They cannot lose their way, and can find their way to any destination given time (although the route is not necessarily the shortest or safest). The pack gains three dice to Enigmas and Occult rolls, and each pack member gains two points of temporary Wisdom.

**Ban:** Meros expects his children to travel, in order to broaden their minds. Packs of Meros must spend four months out of every year "on the road."

## *Dangers of the Realm*

The dangers in Meros' realm come not from within, but from outside. Wyld-spirits constantly intrude, warping and twisting areas to their delight. Unfortunately, it also delights Meros to some degree as it gives him a "new" area to explore. This means that Meros' domain is gradually becoming "wilder" and less stable. Eventually, something will have to be done about it. Meanwhile, the characters could find themselves embroiled in some interactions with the Wyld-spirits moving into the domain.

The greatest dangers are those who might try to slip in and take over the realm while Meros is absent. Agents for the Red Star might see such an opportunity as the perfect precursor to their new lord's entry into the Aetherial Realm. Characters might return with the Incarna to his realm only to find it held against them. If their way back lies along a star road from Meros' domain, they may be out of luck. In such a case, it might take considerable time to locate another star road and learn when it is available. Further, the characters might become embroiled in a war with whoever has usurped Meros' realm.

he even looks deformed, more like a barbell than a globe. Coming closer, however, you can see that the other part is actually Meros' moon, Charon. It orbits so close to the planet that the two often seem melded together when viewed from certain angles. Unlike the gas giants who populate its neighborhood, Meros is a rocky world more like the inner planets or some of the moons of the larger, nearby Incarnae. In fact, those who dispute Meros' right to call himself a planetary Incarna (and there are some who do so) point to the fact that his components and those of Shantar's largest moon Triton are identical. They say that Meros was

once merely a moon, but managed to escape Shantar's vigilance and set himself up as an equal of the Incarnae. Naturally, the Wanderer disputes this claim.

Though made primarily of rock and ice, Meros does not require visitors to suffer the extreme cold and lack of breathable atmosphere that are the realities of his existence. He invites those who would visit with him to travel alongside him as he journeys through the Aetherial heavens. He keeps no permanent dwelling and makes none for travelers. Should any of us wish to set up an encampment for a day or a year, he would not object so long as we caused no damage to his realm, but at some point, he would expect us to continue onward.

The quintessential traveler, Meros is the only Incarna who will leave his planetary body for any length of time in order to sojourn elsewhere. Though the other Incarnae believe this weakens Meros and thus weakens all of them, the Wanderer believes that his treks bring him greater insight and clear his mind so that he is able to better consider difficult problems and reach more intelligent solutions to them. He welcomes those who want to travel with him, seeing life as a constant journey, from childhood to adulthood, from ignorance to knowledge.

Meros chooses to honor the tribe he acts as patron to by most often appearing as one of them. His usual form is as a Crinos Garou with gray fur and pale green eyes. He wears Egyptian-style clothing — a pressed white loincloth and several pieces of elaborate jewelry including a golden belt set with gems, a golden pectoral set with lapis stones and armbands set with winged scarabs of varying colors. His ears are decorated with gold loops and small studs set with carnelian. He carries a staff made of gray wood topped with a claw that holds a polished clear disk. He claims that as he walks and uses the staff, answers come to him in the form of visions, which appear within the disk. It is said that each of the scarabs he wears is in actuality one of his spirit minions who answers when summoned.

Because he follows so few of the rules governing the other Incarnae and because his travels can be so erratic, Meros has a reputation for being somewhat unreliable. His realm's penumbra touches upon the Wyld region of Aetherial space, which may account for his less than stodgy attitudes. He prefers solitude to foolish company, freedom to restriction, movement to stillness and philosophy to untutored action. In this, at least, he resembles Lu-Bat. He has far more restless energy than the Peaceful Counselor, however, and feels compelled toward wandering.

## *Meros' Mystic Path*

Rather than having a single meeting place, Meros considers that anywhere is a place that might be suitable for converse. He enjoys having comrades on the road who speak with him about important or inconsequential matters and who seem to learn from their journey. Such trips start from the central point of his planet and quest outward in any direction he feels he may wish to travel. Thus the route changes constantly. One day he may wish to go east and see

## Other Regions and Phenomena

Numerous other regions lie within the Aetherial Realm. Among these are a Wyld area of space and a Weaver realm, and a portion of space belonging to the Wyrms. Various other phenomena also occupy places within the Aetherial, everything from comets and asteroids to pulsars, more distant stars and anchorheads.

### *The Wyld Reaches*

In the area given over to the Wyld, all physical laws break down and pure creative chaos reigns. Literally anything might be found there. Garou staying for more than a day within the Wyld realm begin to experience the impulse to act chaotically and forget what they are there for. They begin to resist having things around themselves that are not purely natural and pristine. Once this stage begins, characters must make Willpower rolls (difficulty 8) to force themselves to leave Wyld pace.

### *The Weaver Reaches*

In the Weaver Realm, all randomness ceases to be. Characters are subject to most physical laws with the exception of the vacuum of space, needing to breathe and having to eat. Gravity once again applies as they enter Weaver space. Luckily, so many Webs exist there that it is possible for characters to climb to anywhere they need to go and keep themselves from falling through space. Those who stay longer than a day in Weaver Space begin experiencing the desire to create things from other objects (like making daisy chains out of flowers). Soon, they begin to resist performing any actions not leading to the making of something else. Again, they must make Willpower rolls to escape the Weaver Realm, just as they did for the Wyld Realm.

### *The Wyrms Reaches*

Several manifestations of the Wyrms exist in the Aetherial Realm. Massive Wyrms holes dot the Wyrms Reaches here and there, two with attendant hives of Black Spiral Dancers. A few Garou have reached a theory regarding the more distant Wyrms hole. They believe that it also serves as a wormhole in space, opening onto another dimension or another galaxy. According to their theories, Anthelios emerged from that wormhole out on the very edges of the inner Aetherial system, crashing into this space from another galaxy. Those who think this believe that the key to the red star's destruction may lie within the far hive or even beyond it through the wormhole and in the galaxy beyond.

Storytellers should feel free to customize these and any other portions of the Aetherial Realm to suit their individual chronicles.

something he hasn't had time to explore before; another day, he'll insist on going north so that he can reach a certain spot where he received a revelation about something. As he

will tell anyone interested, it isn't the destination that's important, it's the journey itself — the difficulties, the amusements, the lessons learned.





# Chapter Two: Speaking the Language of the Stars

We travel in the dark of the new moon  
A starry highway traced on the map of the sky  
Like lovers and heroes,  
Lonely as the eagles cry,  
We're only at home when we're on the fly...  
— Rush, "Dreamline"

You say you don't believe in astrology, my fine young cubs? Look at yourself whenever Luna shows the face under which you were born, which gave you your auspice. Tell me, then, as your heart pounds with the fierceness of your Garou blood and your nerves sing in response to the light of the moon's phases, that the heavens have no effect on you. Travel to the homes of the Star-spirits and the realms of the Celestines who rule the planets; tell them that their influences pass over their sister Gaia without leaving a trace. I'm sure they would be very glad to hear you say that — if you dare.

Who am I to lecture you? Well, for one thing, I am a traveling scholar in ancient philosophies, a missionary of sorts who has chosen the task of awakening mortals to the true arts of star-speech. Most humans have grown wary of believing in anything that doesn't rely on rational evidence. For them, astrology belongs on a musty shelf with other debunked and discredited bodies of belief such as magic, spiritualism and alchemy.

Oh, in the past century, the whole New Age movement has sparked a new interest in all kinds of odd belief systems — astrology included. But most of the starry-eyed mortals who espouse their version of astrology don't really understand their subject. Either that, or they capitalize on the human need for direction and sense in their universe. All those daily newspaper columns that claim to give you advice from the stars enjoy

such popularity precisely because they give their readers a path to follow. "Travel with care during the following week. Accept advice from an old friend. A new love will enter your life." Prechewed meat for cubs. Useless.

That is not what astrology is about — not the true laws of the heavens, those set when Gaia placed the stars in the vault overhead. I presume you have come to me, at the request of your sept leaders or your pack leader — or for some other reason you choose to keep to yourself — in order to hear something about these rumors of the End Times. "Go talk to Rigel Walks-the-Stars," someone has said to you. "She can explain all about the new star in the Umbra and the disturbances in the Aetherial Realm. She might know how to avert the dooms carved into the heavens' belly."

Well, I can't. Not entirely. I don't have all the answers, yet. What I do have is a lifetime of accumulated observation based on many years spent with the Sept of the Stars as an "adopted" member. Maybe some of what I can tell you will help you come to your own conclusions as to what is going on in the Umbral skies. Maybe you can discover something we can do about it, if anything indeed is possible.

So, let me start by explaining what the humans have discovered — whether truth or fiction, it is undoubtedly the lore that guides... others. Witches and Leeches alike pry secrets from human occultism,



so you'd do well to learn what they believe. If you already know some of this, be patient with those among us who hear it for the first time. Later, I will tell you some things about our knowledge, the true star-wisdom. But first, we must lay the groundwork.

## Astrology

Since the beginning of time, humans have acknowledged their reliance on the heavens, marking the passing of the seasons by the sun and moon, using the patterns of stars as guideposts for travel over land and water or trembling in awe as stars fell, as the sun and moon were seemingly swallowed by darkness. The interdependency of everything in the universe seemed irrefutable in the days before the Weaver's machinations forced discrete patterns at the expense of the greater pattern. Thus, the same early astronomers who studied the skies in an attempt to make sense of their world believed that the events occurring above them in the heavens brought about changes on the earth.

Astrology means the "word of the stars." Through careful divinations, the stars speak to those who understand their language. Different human cultures have developed different forms of astrology, but all variations have one thing in common. All variations of astrology accept the premise that humans, as part of the world, react and respond to what goes on around them — and above them. This acknowledgment forms the basis of all astrology systems, regardless of the cultures they reflect.

Human beliefs evolve through perceptions. Because early civilizations saw the motion of the sun and moon through the sky and noted the steady progress of the stars in the heavens, they saw the earth as the center of the universe. All heavenly phenomena moved through the dome of the sky, from horizon to horizon. Early philosophers and astronomers soon realized that the earth was, in fact, a sphere. Still, they believed that this orb hung in the center of the heavens and that the greater and lesser lights of the skies revolved around it.

When the revelations of Galileo and Kepler proved that the sun, not the earth, served as the center around which the earth and planets moved, astrology fell into disrepute, replaced by cold astronomy. The Catholic Church labeled the practice as blasphemous as any other form of divination — those who still believed were at best subjects of ridicule, at worst sinners punishable by extreme measures.

Astrology's detractors fail to realize that astrological truths lie not in objective but in perceptual reality. Even though rational thought — and scientific evidence — indicate that the earth, along with the other planets in the solar system, revolves around the sun, human senses fail to perceive the motion of the earth. Instead, the eye "sees" the sun rise in the east and set in the west; the stars and the moon "move" across the sky. Venus and Mars "rise and set" in a predictable pattern. Scientific accuracy takes second place to spiritual and psychological truths in the astrological worldview.

In many ways, astrology — even when it enjoyed the status of a "science" — has never been about the "real"

world, but the metaphysical one. In the universe of magical laws and correspondences, astrology served a valid purpose in the past. Many believe that it still does.

Unlike humans, we don't hypothesize or guess. We know that truth in one dimension often reflects the truth of another. The ability to step sideways into the Umbra, a scientific "impossibility," proves that more than one set of laws govern the universe. In the Umbra, the principles of human learning give way to other laws — older laws.

When we travel in the Umbra, we have intimate knowledge of the correspondence and interrelationship between Gaia and Her creatures. In the same fashion, those who travel to the Aetherial Realm perceive the subtle emanations of the stars, planets and other heavenly bodies. In that otherworldly place where the star spirits have their homes, the "laws" of astrology — rather than the laws of physics — have substance.

## Origins of Astrology

Western human astrology, with its twelve signs of the zodiac and its emphasis on the placement of the sun at the moment of birth, began in Babylon. There, astrologers noted the positions of the planets and divided the sky into distinct houses, named according to the nearest star patterns such as the ram, the lion or the scorpion. The Alexandrine Greeks, influenced by Babylonian astrologers, further codified astrology, enhancing it with knowledge taken from Egyptian philosophers. Astrology, in conjunction with magic and alchemy, provided a formidable body of metaphysics through which humans could view, manipulate and act in accordance with the natural order.

Eastern astrology developed along different lines. The Chinese developed a 60-year cycle made up of five 12-year sequences which pair the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac with the five elements — earth, metal, water, wood and fire. Indian astrologers use a combination of the Mesopotamian zodiac with its own 28-mansion lunar cycle. The star-learning of Tibet represents a union of Eastern and Western astrology, using the Indian (or Kartsi) method of solar and lunar divisions of the year in conjunction with the Chinese (Nagtsi) concept of the great cycles.

The Celts, by compare, paid particular attention to the lunar cycle as well as to the passing of the sun, using a system of standing stones to mark the exact moments of the solstices and the equinoxes. Norse and Slavic peoples, like their Get of Fenris protectors, marked the lunar phases but also recognized the prominence of Polaris, the North Star. Native Americans and the Garou of the Pure Lands called the Pleiades the Seven Sisters and honored the sun, moon and stars in their own ceremonies.

In many ways, all of these peoples grasped a portion of the truth. In many ways, they were blind. But as I have said, those others of power, those born among humans who believe in the occult learning that the humans have devel-

## Cultural Astrology and the Thirteen Tribes

The Garou do not doubt that celestial events influence their lives. Their relationship with Luna stands as testimony to their connection to the heavens. Each tribe, however, has its own particular point of view, based on the cultural underpinnings of their origins.

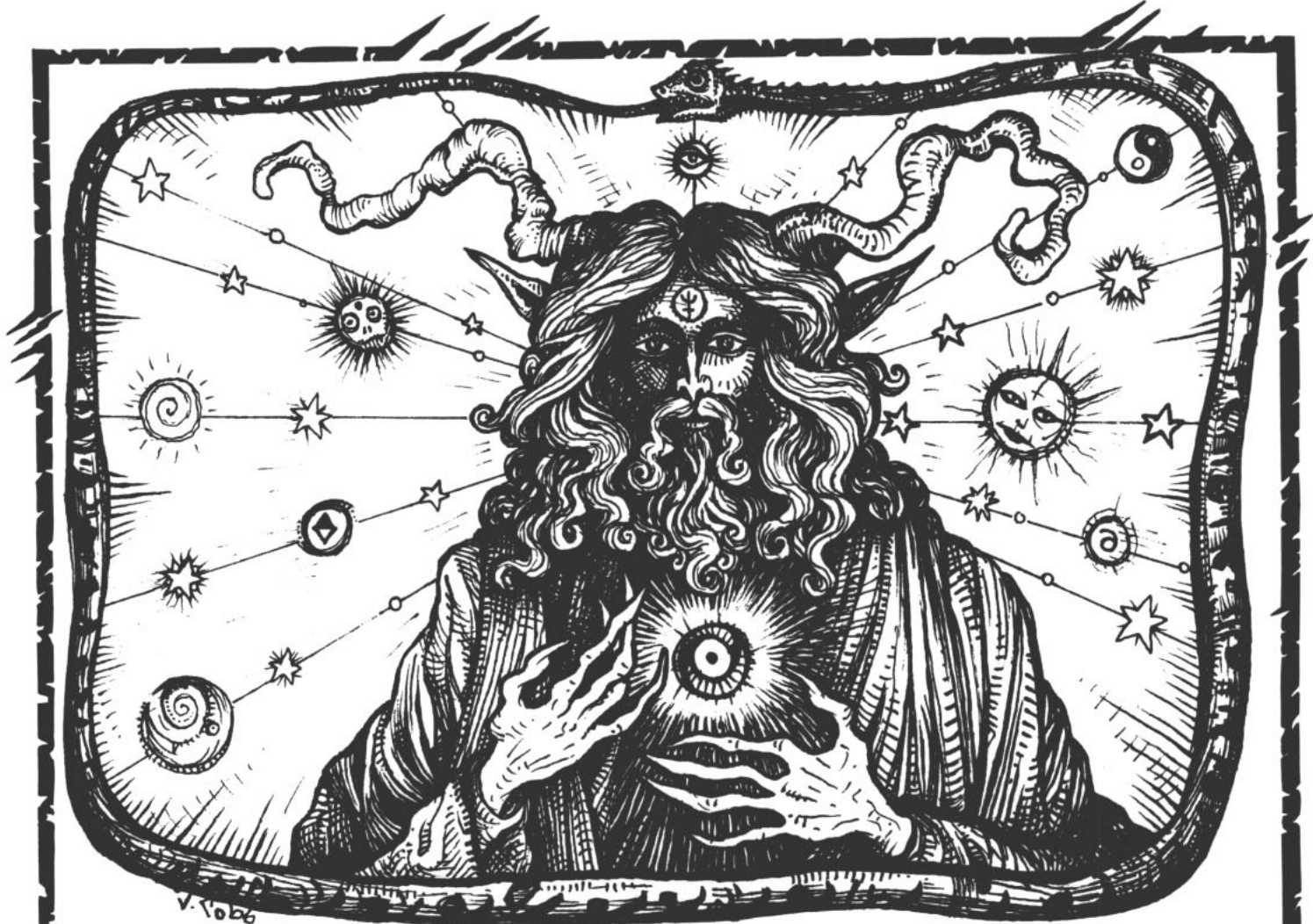
The Black Furies, with their roots in Hellenic culture, draw on the Graeco-Roman legends common to Western astrology. They pay particular attention to the constellations they attribute to female figures such as Andromeda, Diana (their name for Orion) and Cassiopeia as well as to their totem, Pegasus. The Bone Gnawers, Glass Walkers and Children of Gaia all claim descent through the earliest Mesopotamian civilizations of Sumeria and Babylon, which honored Capella (the Goat Star), Hydra (the Water Serpent, also identified with Tiamat) and Sirius (the Dog Star). These more urban tribes are wary of solar eclipses, which they say foretell an increase in vampire activity.

The Fianna, in addition to honoring the moon after the fashion of their Celtic ancestors, also have a special affinity with Ursa Major (which they refer to as The Plough) and the Corona Borealis (the Northern Crown) which marks the home of the Incarna Arianrhod. The Get of Fenris, Shadow Lords and Silver Fangs, with their roots in the Norse and Slavic cultures of eastern Europe, focus special attention on Ursa Major, Ursa Minor, Polaris and Corvus (the Crow). In particular, the Get name Ursa Major Fenris, not some weanling bear. The Silent Striders draw their astrological imagery from Egyptian versions of the constellations; the association with Sirius and the flooding of the Nile once marked the beginning of the Egyptian year.

The Uktena and Wendigo acknowledge the Pleiades as the Seven Sisters and view the Milky Way as the ancestors' pathway to the heavens. The Red Talons, who do not claim human origins at all, respond as their wolf Kinfolk do to the changing phases of the moon and to other major nocturnal phenomena. Some of the Talons have an attunement with Sirius and Polaris, for which they have their own names. More importantly, the Talons will often enter cities to kill on nights of lunar eclipses, believing that Griffin is cloaking Luna with his wings in order to give them shadows to hunt by.

Finally, it should be no surprise that the Stargazers are the pioneers of Garou astrological thought, and rely little on human astrology. Even so, they have some respect for their Kin's concepts, such as the great cycle of the Chinese zodiac as well as the lunar and solar divisions of Tibetan and Hindu astrology. Legend has it that the tribe once maintained many great Umbral orreries, most of which have fallen into disrepair. From such a place, it's said, a truly enlightened seeker could watch the future unfold as the golden stars moved.





oped — they find power in their wisdom. Know what they know, and you will be prepared for their sorceries.

## Umbral Astrology

Nowhere do we feel the connection with the stars and planets more than in the Umbra, particularly in the Aetherial Realm where we are so close to the Celestines and the Star-spirits. On Earth, the effects of these beings (and the heavenly bodies which are their physical manifestations) rarely surface beyond an instinctive sense that something “up there” is causing something “down here.” The laws of science that govern the physical world encourage us to ignore our inherent spiritual link to the stars and planets. In the Aetherial plane, that changes entirely.

Here, the laws of astronomy seem to fade into irrelevance. Here, the spiritual “laws” that determine the harmonious confluence between earth and sky and between individuals and the cosmos come to the fore. It is in the Aetherial Realm that our own knowledge is of greatest utility.

Someone among you is puzzled. Did you think that we subscribe to either Western or Eastern astrology? We have our own way of looking at the stars and planets and, more importantly, the spirits of those celestial bodies. Our astrology does not depend on the perceptions of human civilizations; the Stargazers were naming planets long before Babylon arose. In fact, some of us believe that human astrology arose because the

early cultures noticed the attention we Garou paid to the skies. Our howls to Luna sounded to humans like prayers to the moon goddess — amusing, isn’t it, how close to the truth they were?

My point is, the astrological systems created by humans to explain their relationship to the cosmos apply more to humanity than to Garou. Indeed, there may be some mystical connection between human belief and human fate. The myths and legends that gave rise to the names of the constellations and the signs of the zodiac refer to the history and culture of the human race. Because we share a bond of flesh and blood with human Kinfolk, we, too, can appreciate those legends, but they have less meaning for us than our own knowledge of the celestial rulers.

Let me explain.

## The Luna Effect

Western astrology revolves around the perceived movement of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiacal Belt. For humans, this makes a kind of sense, since they flourish in the sunlight and, until the invention of artificial daylight, tended to regard the night with suspicion and fear. We, however, have a greater affinity for Luna, who gave us our Rage. The moon touches our spirits and makes it possible to reconcile both our human and wolf selves.

That is why the star-watchers among us observe a lunar cycle that begins with the first full moon after the spring equinox.

Each lunar month (from one full moon to the next) lasts for either 29 or 30 days. This results in a lunar year of 355 days as opposed to the solar year of 365 days, and differs from other lunar cycles that use the 28-day passage of the moon around the earth as the basis for a 13-month lunar "year." As you can guess, our years hardly correspond to the arbitrary calendar year of 12 months. Instead, our lore depends on the actual position of the moon in the heavens, rather than on a mere convention for marking the passing of time, for its astrological guideposts. Measuring the passage of time by using the phases of the moon as milestones makes it possible to ignore the effects of such artificial calculations as time zones, leap years and other conceits that humans have devised over the centuries.

In 1998, for example, the Garou lunar year began on April 11—the first full moon after the spring equinox on March 20—and ended on March 30, 1999. The next year began with the full moon on March 31, 1999. In the Umbra, however, there are no "calendars." Time exists outside of human artifice. So our own "year" does not coincide with the calendar year—that is irrelevant.

## The Correspondence Game

Each of the lunar months has its own celestial patron, whose influence governs the events of that particular month in much the same way as the signs of the zodiac rule the months of the year in western astrology. Long ago, the Stargazers developed a system of correspondences for each month and its patron, based on their observances of the Celestines in their Umbral realms, and the advice of the Aetherial spirits. These associations of colors, emotions, natural phenomena and other qualities reinforce the idea of connections among various aspects of the spiritual and physical realms.

Human devotees of both Eastern and Western astrological systems believe that the sign that governs the month or year or time of birth exercises a real and potent effect on personality and life. For ourselves, we know that the phase of the moon at birth defines one's role; further, the patron who governs the lunar cycle of birth and of the First Change also affects temperament and acts as a patron for those born under their influence.

This does not mean that the Celestines control us—any more than Gaia or Luna, who bestow our special favors, control us. A thousand aspects of the physical world affect the physical mind and the emotions every day. The quality of the air makes it easier or more difficult to breathe; barometric pressure causes a range of emotional states from extreme depression to light-headed high spirits. The effect of sunlight, or its lack, on the human spirit is unquestionable. Many individuals suffer from depression during the winter months because of the short days and long nights.

In the same way, lunar cycles reflect the qualities of their ruling Celestines. Garou born during the first lunar cycle, for example, often manifest characteristics attributed to that cycle's patron—Nerigal, the Ice Warrior. Even if a Garou born under

the influence of Nerigal does not appear to possess all (or even some) of the traits of her cycle's patron, she may find it easier to summon her bellicose nature during the month of her birth than at other times during the year. Alternatively, she may react to her patron's influence in other, subtler ways. It can't always be easily defined, but I think you'll find that there's some truth to the influence of the planetary Incarnae.

## The Garou Lunar Year

*The most important thing to understand is that the lunar year not only marks the passage of time from one season to the next, it also symbolizes a journey of the spirit. By attuning ourselves to the procession of lunar months, we travel—literally as well as figuratively—into the heart of what it means to be Garou. Come with me, now, as we begin our journey.*

## The Song of the Celestines

*Fiery spear, blazing eyes  
First the warrior marks the skies  
Fruitful mother, giving birth  
Welcomes new life to the earth  
Lucid messenger, swift of mind  
Carries truth and rumor twined  
Silent lady, mystery-born  
Sheds her light from dusk to morn  
Bright wind's fury, lord of might  
Changes darkness into light  
Secret-keeper, hidden one  
Whispers of the time to come  
Battle-sister, maiden wise  
Sees the world through clouded eyes  
Restless traveler, far from home  
Finds it wise to walk alone  
Lord of heaven, distant king  
Casts his rule o'er every thing  
Calm advisor, child of peace  
In his presence troubles cease  
Shadow-watcher, wrapped in dreams  
From his wisdom knowledge streams  
Ceaseless spinner, never still  
Weaves the patterns of her will  
Shards of anger, ranging free  
Rip apart the tapestry*

## Nerigal, the Ice Warrior: The First Lunar Month

*Fiery spear, blazing eyes  
First the warrior marks the skies*

**Aetherial Realm:** Mars

**Auspice:** Ahroun

**Color:** Reddish orange

**Element:** Fire

**Other Names:** Ares, Mars, Thor, Anhur, Akhnet

**Quality:** Ferocity

**Tarot Card:** Chariot

**Tribe:** Get of Fenris

**Vices:** Anger, battle lust

**Virtues:** Courage, fighting prowess

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Aries

Our lunar year begins fittingly with the cry of battle. Nerigal, the Ice Warrior, reminds us of our duty as warriors of Gaia, chosen to protect the earth from the ravages of the Wyrms. The spirit of war churns relentlessly within our hearts, calling us to fight the enemies of our Mother and to defend all that is Hers. The Ice Warrior embodies fighting prowess, courage in battle and the ardent desire for victory.

Human civilizations have long associated the planet Mars, home of Nerigal, with battle and conquest. The reddish-orange color attributed to Mars not only reflects the blood of battle, but also the fiery bloodlust that fills the hearts of driven soldiers.

Not surprisingly, Nerigal serves as one of the rulers of the Ahroun auspice. Garou born during the Ice Warrior's month, even if they fall under one of the other auspices, may tend toward aggressiveness and ferocity. A Nerigal Ahroun exemplifies the warlike qualities of her Celestial patron to the fullest. Philodox born during the first lunar month often choose to back their judgments with strongly worded arguments and powerful oratory, while Galliards excel in inspiring their packmates in battle through their skill in recounting tales and songs of past conflicts. Theurges ruled by Nerigal use their knowledge of Gaia's mysteries to increase the odds of victory as well as to heal the wounds of their fallen comrades. Even Ragabash who fall under the influence of the Ice Warrior manifest a belligerent attitude in their tricks and rebellions.

The Get of Fenris have a special affinity for Nerigal; the icy Umbral realm inhabited by Nerigal recalls the cold northern lands that gave rise to the Get.

In Western astrology, Nerigal corresponds most closely to Aries, the heavenly ram, also associated with the planet Mars. The ram, long a chosen animal of sacrifice, serves as a reminder that, in war, soldiers give their lives for the cause of victory. Death and bloodshed reside close to the heart of the Garou. As warriors, we fight — and die — to protect Gaia.

Just as bravery and skill in battle epitomize the noblest qualities of those born during the first lunar month, anger and uncontrolled battle lust represent the shortcomings of Garou governed by Nerigal. The Rage that sets us apart from our human and animal Kinfolk can burn too brightly within us, driving us to frenzy. Nerigal's children continually struggle with a greater tendency to give in to the worst aspects of our anger and outrage.

## *Eshtarra, the Songteller: The Second Lunar Month*

*Fruitful mother, giving birth*

*Welcomes new life to the earth*

**Aetherial Realm:** Earth

**Auspice:** Galliard

**Colors:** Blue, green, white

**Element:** Earth

**Other Names:** Gaia, Terra, Danu

**Quality:** Fruitfulness

**Tarot Card:** Empress

**Tribe:** Fianna

**Vices:** Excess

**Virtues:** Nurture

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Taurus

In the second month of the lunar year, we remember the reason for our existence. Gaia, whose realm is Earth, has chosen us to protect Her and Her creation. Her lesser facet, the Incarna known as Eshtarra the Songteller, reminds us of the Earth's richness. Through Eshtarra, we hear the music of the spheres, the songs of Gaia's creatures and the stories of our ancestors. She is the record of our past and the hope for our future. Just as Nerigal gives us the weapons with which to fight, so Eshtarra gives us a reason for our battle — the fruitfulness of the earth and the care which she shows to us, her children.

The Songteller's planet is the Earth itself, for Eshtarra is one of the aspects of Gaia, the nurturing Earth Mother. Her colors are blue, green and white — the green of the forests and grasslands, the blue of the oceans and the white clouds that surround the earth. Eshtarra favors Galliards over the other auspices, since they keep the stories and songs of the Garou close to their hearts. Galliards born during Eshtarra's lunar month seem more attuned to the songs of nature than most other Galliards. Eshtarra Ahroun, while still fierce warriors, fight more fervently on the defense, when they need to exert their prowess to protect something. Philodox born during the month ruled by the Songteller employ parables and tales to illustrate their arguments and explain their decisions. Theurges influenced by Eshtarra respond to the power inherent in the earth, seeing themselves as channels through which Gaia works her will. The tricks and wiles of Eshtarra's Ragabash exhibit an earthiness that often grows crude, but actually brings the tricksters of the Garou closer to an understanding of the Mother.

Eshtarra holds the Fianna close to her, since the Garou of this tribe call her Danu and place her first in their pantheon. The love of music and song associated with the Fianna also endears them to Eshtarra.

Eshtarra corresponds to Taurus, the Bull, in the Western zodiac. This decidedly masculine image complements the female nature of Eshtarra, forming a fertile duality that encompasses the concept of fruitfulness and propagation.



Creativity and productivity, both aspects of the nurturing quality that is Eshtarra's primary strength, reach their highest levels in the Songteller's children. Overproductiveness and undisciplined creativity — excess — constitute the greatest failing of those Garou born during the second lunar month.

### ***Mitanu, the Clever Rogue: The Third Lunar Month***

*Lucid messenger, swift of mind  
Carries truth and rumor twined*

**Aetherial Realm:** Mercury  
**Auspice:** Ragabash  
**Colors:** Pale brown, gray  
**Element:** Air  
**Other Names:** Hermes, Mercury, Loki, Jurima  
**Quality:** Quickness  
**Tarot Card:** Magician  
**Tribe:** Bone Gnawers  
**Vices:** Avarice  
**Virtues:** Agility, Mental Acuity  
**Zodiac Correspondence:** Gemini

Our journey into the third lunar month takes us from the realm of the mother to the realm of the eternal child, the trickster at heart. Mitanu, the Clever Rogue, reminds us that after the seriousness of battle and the solemnity of the mother's presence, we need the relief of tension that comes from laughter. Mitanu's influence leads us down the convoluted paths of trickery and swift thought.

The colors pale brown and gray suggest a mixture of other hues, a muddled and often confused painter's palate of murky half-truths and almost lies. Mercury, the planetary home of Mitanu, appears thus in the sky as it rushes around the sun intent on its own unfathomable purposes. Air is Mitanu's element, the medium of movement and speech.

Mitanu favors the Ragabash auspice for their irreverent attitude and ability to adapt swiftly to any circumstance. Ragabash born during the third lunar month demonstrate an almost preternatural quickness of thought and flexibility of action. Ahroun ruled by Mitanu exhibit fast reflexes in combat and an ability to think on their feet. His Philodox enjoy a glibness of speech and the ability to talk their way out of almost any situation. Galliards born during Mitanu's month excel in humorous songs and stories, even though the truths they illustrate may be serious. Mitanu-born Theurges use their gifts in unexpected ways, experimenting with the outer limits of their powers.

The Bone Gnawers' talent for survival through adaptation and grit appeals to Mitanu, and he honors them above the other tribes. Shrewdness, quickness of thought and action — these are the marks on those Bone Gnawers fortunate enough to claim Mitanu as their birth patron.

Western astrology links Mercury with the sign Gemini, the celestial twins and the patrons of communication (and

miscommunication). In Graeco-Roman mythology, Mercury or Hermes serves as the messenger of the gods, but his messages do not always contain accurate information and occasionally seem deliberately misleading. The term "mercurial" implies a whimsical changeability — no coincidence, this.

Mental agility and swiftness of movement embody Mitanu's best attributes. His weakness lies in the avarice that comes from always seeming one step ahead of everyone else. Garou born during the month of Mitanu need to guard against the tendency to hoard information as well as control its dissemination. This greed also manifests as a desire to acquire what others have, occasionally leading to an uncontrollable need to accumulate physical things as well as knowledge.

### ***Sokhta, the Lambent Lady: The Fourth Lunar Month***

*Silent lady, mystery-born  
Sheds her light from night to morn*

**Aetherial Realm:** Moon  
**Auspice:** Theurge  
**Colors:** Silver, gray, white  
**Element:** Spirit  
**Other Names:** Luna, Phoebe, Artemis, Diana, Tsuki-yomi, Seline  
**Quality:** Mystery  
**Tarot Card:** High Priestess  
**Tribe:** Stargazers  
**Vices:** Envy, madness  
**Virtues:** Depth, quiet  
**Zodiac Correspondence:** Cancer

After laughter comes reflection. Thus, the fourth lunar month honors Sokhta, the Lambent Lady, whose Umbral realm consists of the moon. Just as Eshtarra embodies one facet of Gaia, so Sokhta, as a lesser Incarna of Luna, reminds us of the mystery of the moon. As the moon reflects the light of the sun, so Sokhta holds up a mirror in which Garou can see the light of their spirit. Sokhta teaches us the importance of reflection, of looking within ourselves to find the calm center within the storm of our being.

Silver, gray and white — the colors of Luna — conjure up a sense of calm and tranquility. Spirit, the element associated with Sokhta, reminds us that we dwell in two worlds, the flesh-bound realm of our physical bodies and the spirit-clothes world of the Umbra. The moon, which guides us through our changing forms, sheds her pale, lambent radiance upon us in both the physical and Umbral realms. Sokhta represents all that is mysterious and unknowable in the universe.

As the patron of mystery and magic, Sokhta honors the auspice of the crescent moon with her favors. Theurges born in the fourth lunar month feel an intense attunement to their Gifts, using them instinctively in response to their state of unconscious receptivity. Sokhta Ahroun demonstrate a calmness in battle that belies the passion with which

they fight. Ragabash born in Sokhta's month employ a subtle humor in their tricks and excel at evading censure for their rebellious acts. Galliards of the fourth lunar month seem to know how to evoke great emotions with delicacy and sensitivity, while Sokhta's Philodox appeal to the unconscious motivations of those they wish to convince.

The Stargazers hold Sokhta as their astrological patron. The emphasis this tribe places on meditation and the unconscious unfolding of action and being endears them to the Lambent Lady.

Western astrology attributes the fourth month to Cancer, the sky-crab. The Egyptians and Babylonians knew this constellation as the Gate of Man, the portal through which souls crossed into the world at birth. In a similar fashion, Sokhta acts as a spiritual portal, our link with the world of the Umbra. It is not accidental that we have come to call the action of entering the Umbra "stepping sideways," a favorite motion of the crab.

At best, those born under Sokhta's patronage exhibit an inner depth and a calmness of mien indicative of those who possess knowledge of the many mysteries of the universe. At worst, Sokhta's children fall prey to envy, since they know not only what they have but also what they lack, and madness — the "lunacy" so often associated with the moonstruck.

### ***Katanka-Sonnak, The Wind Rider: The Fifth Lunar Month***

*Bright wind's fury, lord of might  
Changes darkness into light*

**Aetherial Realm:** Sun

**Auspice:** Ahroun

**Color:** Yellow

**Element:** Fire

**Other Names:** Helios, Hyperion, Sol, Re, Lugh

**Quality:** Warmth

**Tarot Card:** Strength

**Tribe:** Wendigo

**Vices:** Gluttony

**Virtues:** Energy, vigor

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Leo

Action follows introspection, and the fifth lunar month resonates with purposeful activity. Katanka-Sonnak, the Wind Rider, springs from his fiery mansion in the sun to announce his presence to the universe. Called the Wind Rider because of his association with the solar winds that sweep through space, Katanka-Sonnak represents the energy of renewal and rebirth.

Bright yellow, like the sun at its peak, is the color of Katanka-Sonnak. His element, fire, invigorates the world and provides the catalyst for action and life, even in the coldest climes.

Ahroun enjoy the patronage of Katanka-Sonnak above the other auspices, since they bask in the directed action of battle and relish the heady flush of victory over their enemies. Ahroun born during the fifth lunar month, therefore, tend to



wage war with all the drama of the great heroes of the First Times, risking themselves with confidence rooted in their boundless energy. Katanka-Sonnak Ragabash have a directness to them that seems uncharacteristic of their auspice; their tricksterish ways tend toward the bawdy and flamboyant. In the same fashion, Galliards born with Katanka-Sonnak as their patron delight in dramatic renditions of songs and stories, delivering their repertoire with a fierce exuberance that infects those around them with heightened emotions. Philodox influenced by Katanka-Sonnak pronounce their judgments with a single-minded conviction, delivering fiery speeches to argue their decisions and brooking no opposition. And the Wind Rider's Theurges often prefer allying with vibrantly active spirits of fire, wind and other exuberant qualities.

Katanka-Sonnak favors the brashness of the Wendigo, despite their affiliation with the cold winter lands and the icy cannibal spirit of their totem. The angry energy of the youngest of the three tribes who came to the Pure Lands attracts Katanka-Sonnak, who watches them burn with the pure brightness of the winter sun.

In the western Zodiac, Katanka-Sonnak roughly corresponds to the sign Leo, associated with the Nemean lion of Herculean myth. The meteor shower known as the Leonids originates in the part of the sky ruled by Leo, and these fiery messengers also echo aspects of the "Wind-Rider."

Garou ruled by Katanka-Sonnak demonstrate great energy and vitality in their actions, never faltering in their duty toward Gaia. The Wind Rider's weakness, gluttony, comes from his insatiable hunger for action the need to constantly fuel his inner drive.

## ***Hakahe, the Ebon Whisperer: The Sixth Lunar Month***

*Secret-keeper, hidden one*

*Whispers of the time to come*

**Aetherial Realm:** Vulcan

**Auspice:** Theurge

**Colors:** Black, red

**Element:** Fire

**Other Names:** Hephaestus, Khnemu, Goibnu, Volundr, Tehuti

**Quality:** Sorcery

**Tarot Card:** The Hermit

**Tribe:** Uktena

**Vices:** Despair

**Virtues:** Creation, destruction

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Virgo

The sixth lunar month favors brooding thoughts, as opposed to the fierce directed action of the previous period. Hakahe, the Ebon Whisperer, epitomizes the sinister aspects of our nature. The celestial lord of the hidden planet, Vulcan, reminds us of the shameful deeds we wish to hide and the dark memories we prefer to forget. We invoke the influence of the Ebon Whisperer, too, for certain rituals that

require secrecy, darkness or silence. Hakahe presides over knowledge too dangerous for the light of day.

Associated with the patrons of smithing and making, Hakahe's colors, black and red, bring to mind the fires of the smithy's forge and the metal beaten into shape upon the anvil of creation. The qualities of both creation and destruction fall under the province of the Ebon Whisperer, reminding us that in order to make something new, we often need to break what has gone before.

Hakahe favors the Theurge, whose Gifts celebrate the sorcerous and who delves deep into the mysteries that many Garou prefer to ignore. Theurges born under the patronage of Hakahe often devote themselves to discovering knowledge that many would consider forbidden. Hakahe's Ahroun take advantage of available Gifts to enhance their combat capabilities. Philodox born during the sixth lunar month may prefer to surround their judgments with secrecy, believing that they need not explain the reasons for their rulings. Ragabash born under the influence of the Ebon Whisperer take pleasure in planning elaborate and anonymous pranks. Hakahe's Galliards delight in collecting riddle songs and obscure stories.

The secretive Uktena, whose determination to uncover the lost and forbidden knowledge of the earliest days, enjoy the particular attention of Hakahe, who considers them the children of his heart. The Ebon Whisperer approves of the importance this tribe attaches to learning Gifts and ferreting out forgotten sources of power.

Western astrology attributes this time of year to the sign Virgo, the virgin goddess whose names include Cybele, Demeter and Ishtar and whom the Christians celebrate in the guise of the Virgin Mary. The mysteries associated with women's rites and rituals in early human cultures correspond with the secrecy cherished by the Ebon Whisperer.

Garou who demonstrate the best qualities of Hakahe understand the dual bond between creation and destruction, the union of opposing forces that gives rise to the existence of the universe. The Ebon Whisperer's greatest flaw lies in his penchant for despair caused by too much time spent in solitary contemplation of forbidden and dangerous lore.

## ***Tambiyah, The Veiled Mother: The Seventh Lunar Month***

*Battle-sister, maiden wise*

*Sees the world through clouded eyes*

**Aetherial Realm:** Venus

**Auspice:** Galliard

**Color:** Gold

**Element:** Fire

**Other Names:** Aphrodite, Freya, Astarte, Sabaal

**Quality:** Wisdom

**Tarot Card:** Justice

**Tribe:** Black Furies

**Vices:** Lust



**Virtues:** Protection, purity, sensuality

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Libra

The seventh lunar month marks the beginning of the second half of the lunar cycle and returns our thoughts to the importance of the balance. Tambiyah, the Veiled Mother, epitomizes the delicate interplay of opposites that leads to wisdom and true judgment. Building on the previous cycle's acknowledgment of the necessity of both creation and destruction, Tambiyah represents the purity that results when we attain perfect balance.

Gold, the color associated with Tambiyah, links the Veiled Mother with the concepts of wealth and warmth, both symbols of richness and fruitfulness. The planet Venus serves as Tambiyah's realm, its cloud-cover providing a veil of protection for its surface.

Tambiyah favors the Galliard auspice since the Moon Dancers also act as protectors of the past and serve as repositories of wisdom for future generations. Galliards born under Tambiyah's influence place great emphasis on the lessons contained within their songs and stories. Ahroun born during the month of the Veiled Mother exemplify the courage in battle shown by mothers in defense of their children, while Tambiyah's Philodox temper their justice with mercy whenever possible. Theurges under the patronage of the Veiled Mother use their Gifts for both healing and protection. Tambiyah's Ragabash cannot resist the impulse to use their playfulness to teach or to warn against potential dangers.

Tambiyah embraces the Black Furies as her tribe, recognizing that their fierce advocacy of women and children seeks to restore balance to a world threatened by the depredations of an irresponsible patriarchy. The combination of strength and sensuality present in the Furies, along with their dedication to women's traditions and culture, appeals to the Veiled Mother's sense of justice.

In western astrology, Tambiyah roughly corresponds to Libra, the Golden Scales of harmony and balance. Libra represents the striving for equity and fairness in all things as well as the tempering power of love as an agent of change and re-creation.

Tambiyah's children in their noblest form combine sensuality and purity in perfect harmony. The Veiled Mother's strength lies in her ability to protect the dance of opposites. Her fault lies in the abandonment of balance that comes when love degenerates into mere lust — whether for power, pleasure or material gain.

## ***Meros, The Wandering Mystic: The Eighth Lunar Month***

*Restless traveler, far from home*

*Finds it wise to walk alone*

**Aetherial Realm:** Pluto

**Auspice:** Philodox

**Colors:** Light gray, rusty orange

**Element:** Earth

**Other Names:** Hades, Dis, Anpw, Arawn, Yama, Hel, Kwa

**Quality:** Movement

**Tarot Card:** Judgment

**Tribe:** Silent Striders

**Vices:** Unreliability

**Virtues:** Adaptability, versatility

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Scorpio

The eighth lunar month belongs to Meros, the Wandering Mystic. With his ascendancy, the year turns once more away from balance and stability to errancy and restlessness. Meros watches over the relentless search for truth, the compulsion to follow whatever path might lead to knowledge and the willingness to accept the possibility — no, the certainty — that our quest inevitably results in death.

Meros' realm centers on the planet Pluto, at the far reaches of the solar system in the physical world. Pluto's erratic orbit makes it a nomad of the skies.

The colors light gray and rusty orange resemble the dull colors of shrouds, rusted objects and travel-worn garments, their brightness and newness faded from much use. Associated with the deities that rule the various underworlds of human religions, Pluto represents movement not only in place but also from one state of being to another. Earth, which houses the Underworld and receives not only the bodies of the dead but also the seeds of new life, is the element associated with Meros.

The Philodox auspice enjoys the special patronage of Meros, who recognizes that lawgivers and counselors must adapt themselves to many circumstances. Meros' Philodox show a flair for rendering versatile judgments even in the most demanding situations. Ahroun born during the eighth lunar month demonstrate fearlessness in the face of death and a readiness to adapt their fighting styles to suit the nature of their opponent. Meros-born Theurges explore the boundaries of their powers, while Ragabash ruled by Meros seldom repeat the same trick more than once. Meros' Galliards relish songs and tales that end in death or transformation.

The Silent Striders fall under Meros' patronage, not only for their penchant for wandering but also for their familiarity with the Dark Umbra and the realms of the dead. The rootless meandering of the Striders call to the heart of the Wandering Mystic.

In the western zodiac, Meros corresponds to Scorpio, the sign of intense sexuality as well as the guardian of death and rebirth. Governed by Pluto, Scorpio also resonates with echoes of Osiris, Mithras, Orpheus, Balder and Christ. As the ancients understood, the agent of birth and death is one and the same; life represents the movement from one state of existence to another.

Meros-born Garou demonstrate the virtues of adaptability and versatility at best, always able to adjust to new circumstances or surroundings. At worst, Meros Garou suffer from an unreliable nature and an erratic, unpredictable temperament.

## Zarok, The Crowned Ruler: The Ninth Lunar Month

*Lord of heaven, distant king  
Casts his rule o'er every thing*

**Aetherial Realm:** Jupiter

**Auspice:** Philodox

**Colors:** Red, white, yellow

**Element:** Air

**Other Names:** Zeus, Dagda, Frey, Gitchi Manitou, Divaa

**Quality:** Authority

**Tarot Card:** The Emperor

**Tribe:** Silver Fangs

**Vices:** Pride

**Virtues:** Leadership

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Sagittarius

In the ninth lunar month, our journey of the spirit leaves the realm of rootless wandering and embarks upon the ambitious road of leadership. This month belongs to Zarok, the Crowned Ruler, and acknowledges that every cohesive group of individuals must, inevitably, bow to the one who leads them. The authority of the leader, however, comes only after many tests of worthiness and through the consent of those who must follow. Power gained is power granted, not stolen or usurped.

Zarok calls the giant planet Jupiter his home. From that planet's vast domain, the Crowned Ruler reigns in splendor over the Umbral solar system. The colors attributed to Zarok, red, white and yellow, represent the planet's physical appearance. Additionally, these three colors symbolize the red of impassioned commitment, the white of self-sacrifice and the yellow of spiritual zeal, all qualities essential in a good leader. Zarok represents authority at its best, rather than the tyranny and despotism so often seen in the physical world.

The auspice of Philodox enjoys the patronage of Zarok, who understands the need for thoughtful and decisive leadership and guidance. Philodox born during the ninth lunar month exercise their authority with confidence, knowing that their right to pass judgment comes from a thorough understanding of the traditions and laws of the Garou. Zarok-born Ahroun often act as battle leaders and strategy planners, while Theurges who claim the Crowned Ruler as their patron excel in using their powers to create a sense of unity and purpose in those around them. Zarok's Galliards enjoy entertaining their audiences with stories of heroes and great leaders, and Ragabash born during Zarok's month demonstrate a shameless audacity in their pranks.

Zarok favors the Silver Fangs above other tribes, recognizing their long tradition of leadership and their familiarity with the ability to exercise authority. The natural charisma of the Silver Fangs echoes Zarok's own magnanimous nature.

Western astrology attributes this time of year to Sagittarius, the archer of the heavens. In Babylonian myth, the archer also symbolized Marduk, the war god. The configura-

tion of stars known as the Corona Australis, or Southern Crown, lies at the feet of Sagittarius, thus lending credence to the image of leadership. Also known as the Centaur, Sagittarius corresponds to Chiron, the wise teacher of Greek myth.

At their best, Garou born during the month of the Crowned Ruler demonstrate wisdom in their roles as leaders. Zarok's weakness, however, lies in a tendency to fall prey to overweening pride and self-aggrandizement.

## Lu-Bat, The Peaceful Counselor: The Tenth Lunar Month

*Calm advisor, child of peace  
In his presence troubles cease*

**Aetherial Realm:** Saturn

**Auspice:** Ragabash

**Colors:** Greenish-brown, yellow

**Element:** Earth

**Other Names:** Cronos, Ptah, Bran, Balder, Thoth, Pah

**Quality:** Acceptance

**Tarot Card:** The World

**Tribe:** Children of Gaia

**Vices:** Sloth

**Virtues:** Peace, wisdom

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Capricorn

The tenth lunar month sees our journey take an inward turn, away from the expansive qualities of leadership toward the restrictive principle that leads us to understand our limitations and come to terms with both our strengths and weaknesses. Lu-Bat, the Peaceful Counselor, assists us in this inner quest for acceptance.

From the gloomy realm of Saturn, enclosed by rings of cosmic matter, Lu-Bat exercises his influence over the boundaries that create our lives and determine the limits of our aspirations. Greenish brown and yellow, the colors of Saturn, symbolize the earth tones of the material world. Saturn reminds us that we exist in a world of finite possibilities and that our lives play out against the backdrop of space and time.

Lu-Bat cherishes the critical nature of the Ragabash auspice. Ragabash born under the influence of the Peaceful Counselor use their tricks as commentaries on the foibles of those around them, attempting to ridicule others into returning to their proper courses of action. Ahroun born during the tenth lunar month may rouse to action slowly, but once they do, they fight with a keen awareness of their enemies' weaknesses (as well as of their own vulnerabilities). Lu-Bat's Philodox often counsel caution and care, passing judgment only after careful deliberation and making certain to leave no loopholes in their decisions. Galliards who acknowledge Lu-Bat as their patron appreciate the strict meter and form of traditional poetry and song and eschew the unmetered, free-form compositions of more modern times. Lu-Bat's Theurges study the limits of their powers carefully, so as not to overreach themselves when exercising their abilities.

The Children of Gaia, who have long acted as advisors to the Garou, enjoy the favor of Lu-Bat, who approves of that tribe's desire for reconciliation and acceptance. Echoing Lu-Bat's concern with moderation and limitation, the Children of Gaia seek to teach universal respect for boundaries and differences.

Western astrology attributes this time of year to Capricorn, the fish-tailed goat of the stars. Associated in Babylonian myth with the god Ea, considered the savior of humanity during the great World-Flood, Capricorn also symbolizes Pan, the god of exceeding limitations. Ruled by Saturn, the sign of the water-goat contains an inherent duality — in order to understand the concept of limits, an individual must also comprehend the consequences of stepping outside those boundaries. The Roman festival of the Saturnalia had at its heart not only the celebration of excess but also the understanding of its consequences.

Garou born during Lu-Bat's month may aspire to the rare state of acknowledging and accepting limitations without feeling overly restricted by them. At worst, Lu-Bat's greatest failing lies in a tendency toward sloth and inertia, drawing contentment in resting idly within comfortable limits.

### ***Ruatma, the Shadowed One: The Eleventh Lunar Month***

*Shadow-watcher, wrapped in dreams*

*From his wisdom knowledge streams*

**Aetherial Realm:** Uranus

**Auspice:** Theurge

**Color:** Pale aqua

**Element:** Water

**Other Names:** Ouranos, Wotan, Siku

**Quality:** Secrecy

**Tarot Card:** Star

**Tribe:** Shadow Lords

**Vices:** Treachery

**Virtues:** Diplomacy, discretion, secrecy, strategy

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Aquarius

In the eleventh lunar month, we again turn our attention to secret ways and means. Guided by the influence of Ruatma, the Shadowed One, we discover the hidden country of dreams and the secret world of signs and portents. We also learn how best to manipulate the dreams and desires of others in order to achieve our goals.

Ruatma makes his home in the realm of Uranus, the planet associated with sleep and dreams as well as with awakening to new possibilities. The much-vaunted "Age of Aquarius" would have claimed Uranus as its guiding spirit, but it has come to naught — humans, as usual, have only lightly scabbled in the sand for their answers. Pale aqua, the color of the sea, corresponds to this time of year and reminds us of the oceanic current of unconscious thought that gives birth to new ideas.

Ruatma favors the Theurge auspice for its emphasis on deciphering the secrets of power. Theurges born under the

influence of Ruatma prove adept at reading signs and portents, interpreting dreams and planning how best to use their Gifts to direct matters in a subtle fashion. Ruatma-born Ahroun excel in underhanded (though not necessarily dishonorable) battle tactics, taking advantage of every weakness shown them by their enemies. Philodox born during the eleventh lunar month demonstrate a strong flair for negotiation and diplomatic solutions, while Galliards use their knowledge of lore and legend to manipulate the emotions of their listeners. Ragabash who fall under the patronage of the Shadowed One employ a host of dirty tricks to undercut authority.

Ruatma relishes the Shadow Lords' flair for subtle manipulation and shadowy dealings. As consummate diplomats, the Lords epitomize Ruatma's position as the power behind the throne rather than the front-line leader.

Western astrology attributes this month to Aquarius, the Water Bearer. Ruled by Uranus, the sky titan of the ancient Greeks, Aquarius also symbolizes Ganymede, the cupbearer to the gods and, by implication, the confidant of many of the immortals. Uranus represents the power of insight to break down existing limits and restructure the world in new ways.

The best qualities of Ruatma emphasize subtle diplomacy and keen understanding of hidden meanings. The Shadowed One's greatest fault lies in a tendency toward treachery, whenever ambition and selfishness assume the upper hand.

### ***Shantar, the Loom Maker: The Twelfth Lunar Month***

*Ceaseless spinner, never still*

*Weaves the patterns of her will*

**Aetherial Realm:** Neptune

**Auspice:** Philodox

**Colors:** Dark blue-gray, white

**Element:** Water

**Other Names:** Poseidon, Lir, Aegir, Liau

**Quality:** Mutability

**Tarot Card:** Moon

**Tribe:** Glass Walkers

**Vices:** Heedlessness

**Virtues:** Invention

**Zodiac Correspondence:** Pisces

The twelfth lunar month belongs to Shantar, the Loom Maker, and completes the pattern of the year by weaving its events into the tapestry of time. Shantar governs creation and invention, and thus reflects the synthesis that comes from uniting opposite forces.

Shantar makes her Umbral home in the realm of Neptune. The dark blue-gray and white colors associated with the planet correspond to the ever-moving ocean. Shantar exhibits a changeable nature, just as the sea never remains still. Water is her element, for in its depths reside all the necessary ingredients for new life.



The Loom Maker shows an affinity for the Philodox auspice, seeing the lawgivers of the Garou as primary movers in the creation of a structured society. Shantar-born Ahroun tend to experiment with new tactics in battle rather than rely on tried and true methods of fighting. Ragabash born during the last month of the Garou lunar year constantly invent new ways of acting as goads and pranksters. Galliards born under Shantar's influence enjoy complex songs and stories, using their talents to weave vivid images for the entertainment and edification of their listeners. The Loom Maker's Theurges seek new ways to use their Gifts and enjoy the complicated patterns involved in performing rites.

The Glass Walkers, supreme upholders of the principle of "making," enjoy the protection of Shantar. The Loom Maker appreciates the Glass Walkers' dedication to appropriate technology and their belief in the importance of pattern and structure in a world balanced between formlessness and stagnation.

Western astrology attributes this month to Pisces, the dual sign of the fish. The obvious yin-yang symbolism associated with the pictorial image of the sign emphasizes the twin aspects of Pisces — creation and destruction, hope and despair, action and stillness. Christian symbolism links the fish to Christ, while Sumerian myth represents Ichthys, the god of death and rebirth, as a sacred fish born from the union between Atagartis, the goddess of love, and the Euphrates River.

The best qualities of Shantar lie in her infinite capacity for invention and in her willingness to concede the necessity of change. Her chief flaws consist of her tendencies toward rashness and thoughtless change for its own sake.

### ***Rorg, The Many-Taloned Hunter: The Thirteenth Sign***

*Shards of anger, ranging free*

*Rip apart the tapestry*

**Aetherial Realm:** Asteroid belt

**Auspice:** Ahroun

**Color:** Dark gray

**Element:** Spirit

**Other Names:** Legion

**Quality:** Instinct

**Tarot Card:** Tower

**Tribe:** Red Talons

**Vices:** Hatred

**Virtues:** Cooperation

**Zodiac Correspondence:** None

Though not part of the lunar year, the Celestine known as Rorg, the Many-Taloned Hunter, occupies a vital place in Garou astrology. Known to the Stargazers as the Thirteenth Sign, Rorg presides over catastrophic change and our instinctive responses to disaster.

The Many-Taloned Hunter makes his lair in the asteroid belt between the solar system's inner and outer planets.

Associated closely with cyclic change and recurring cataclysms, Rorg hovers in the spaces between the stars, waiting for the day when his separate aspects can reassemble themselves into one whole being. Dark gray, associated with doom and darkness, is the color attributed to Rorg. Long ago, so our legends tell us, the Many-Taloned Hunter existed as a planet whose orbit placed it somewhere between that of Mars and Jupiter. A great catastrophe caused that planet to burst asunder, scattering its lifeless pieces throughout what was once its natural orbit. Some say that one of the largest pieces of Rorg struck Earth in its earliest days, causing life to take a drastic new direction from its original evolutionary process.

Rorg favors the Ahroun auspice, since its multiplicity of forms resembles an army on the march. Although the Hunter does not "rule" over any given lunar month, some Garou seem to gravitate toward Rorg as their patron regardless of the actual sign of their birth. Because of this, Garou who claim Rorg as their celestial ruler do so out of choice rather than accident. Rorg's Ahroun are born to the tactics of the pack, overwhelming their foes by sheer force of numbers. Philodox who claim Rorg's patronage make their decisions by instinct or group consensus, while his Galliards favor extemporaneous performances and endeavor to draw their audiences into participating along with them. Rorg's Theurges favor Gifts that increase their battle-readiness, while Ragabash who follow the Many-Taloned Hunter sometimes turn destructive in their tricks.

Long before their hideous transformation into the Black Spiral Dancers, the White Howlers enjoyed the favor of Rorg. Known for their fierceness in battle and their ability to act as a group, the Howlers exemplified the cooperative principle represented by the many parts of the Hunter. But when they were lost to the Wyrms, Rorg looked elsewhere. He found another, possibly even more sympathetic tribe in the Red Talons. The Talons' mourning for species lost to extinction strikes a chord in Rorg's heart; the tribe and the Incarna are well-matched in their sense of loss and their savage desire for revenge.

Western astrology has no precise counterpart for the Thirteenth Sign, though many astrologers admit to the cosmic influence of several of the larger asteroids — specifically the four largest bodies that inhabit the asteroid belt, attributing them to Juno, Ceres, Pallas Athena and Vesta.

Rorg's strength lies in the virtue of cooperation, an asset to Garou, whose natural tendencies lead them to work as a pack. Hatred and a desire for vengeance represent the chief weaknesses of the Many-Taloned Hunter.

### ***The Lost, The Disinherited and the Forgotten***

You are quick to point out that my description of the lunar cycle still does not include all of the tribes of the Garou. Yes, you are right. Three other celestial beings dwell in the higher reaches, entities that do not figure directly in



### *Garou Lunar Cycles*

The twelve lunar phases for 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 are listed below, along with the Celestines that govern them. To calculate previous cycles, you can use a calendar which lists the phases of the moon for the desired year. Alternately, the following websites provide tables for calculating the phases of the moon:

[www.ameritech.net/users/paulcarlisle/mooncalendar.html](http://www.ameritech.net/users/paulcarlisle/mooncalendar.html)

[www.google.com/moon/](http://www.google.com/moon/)

[www.io.com/~tag/cgi-bin/moonphase/moonphase.html](http://www.io.com/~tag/cgi-bin/moonphase/moonphase.html)

<i>Patron</i>	<i>1998-1999</i>	<i>1999-2000</i>
Nerigal	Apr. 11-May 10	Mar. 31-Apr. 29
Eshtarra	May 11-June 8	Apr. 30-May 29
Mitanu	June 9-July 8	May 30-June 27
Sokhta	July 9-Aug. 6	June 28-July 27
Katanka-Sonnak	Aug. 7-Sept. 5	July 28-Aug. 25
Hakahe	Sept. 6-Oct. 4	Aug. 26-Sept. 24
Tambiyah	Oct. 5-Nov. 3	Sept. 25-Oct. 23
Meros	Nov. 4-Dec. 2	Oct. 24-Nov. 22
Zarok	Dec. 3-Dec. 31, 1998	Nov. 23-Dec. 21
Lu-Bat	Jan. 1, 1999-Jan. 30	Dec. 22-Jan. 20, 2000
Ruatma	Jan. 31-Mar. 1	Jan. 21-Feb. 18
Shantar	Mar. 2-Mar. 30	Feb. 19-Mar. 19

the procession of the astrological year but which do have an impact on our fate. I speak of the patrons of the Croatan, the Black Spirals and the Bunyip.

### *Songan, The Noble Brother*

A Stargazer legend concerning the origins of the Garou lunar year tells how the Croatan turned down a chance for representation among the months. As they reasoned it, the newly split Garou Nation had formed fifteen tribes, and only twelve months existed. Therefore, they would give up their place in the calendar to their youngest brother Wendigo and seek their place among the traveling comets that range far into the deepest parts of the universe.

The selfless offer of the Croatan met with the approval of the other tribes, who then apportioned themselves among the months of the year and thus received their celestial patrons. The Croatan waited with patient dignity until the prophesied time came for them to give their lives to banish the Eater-of-Souls. The Stargazers, however, kept their memory alive by placing them under the patronage of the comets that roam throughout the galaxies and whose spirits dwell in the outer reaches of the Deep Umbra.

In 1977, an astronomer in California discovered a large comet along the outer extremes of the solar system, its orbit taking it near Saturn and Uranus, and occasionally bringing it as close as Jupiter. The comet received the name Chiron, after the mythological centaur (also associated with Sagittarius), but the Garou recognized it as Songan, the Noble Brother, patron of the lost Croatan. The Noble Brother makes his rounds over a period of just over 50 years. Its "discovery" by human astronomers in 1977 seemed to indicate to some Stargazers that the time for the reappearance of the Croatan was drawing near.

As you can see, they were wrong.

The Uktena, who rarely share their secrets with other tribes, have begun to whisper that one of their legendary heroes, the Umbral seeker known as Dancing Star, has visited the dreams of certain of their Theurges. According to the Uktena, Dancing Star died in body while her astral self traveled in the Deep Umbra on a quest for signs of the Croatan. Some Uktena now believe that the appearance of Chiron signals the return of Dancing Star with news that the Croatan have been found. Other Uktena feel that, if Dancing Star's spirit has found her way back, she has come only to bring the news that the final days are just around the corner.

### *Yakecen, The Fallen Singer*

When the White Howlers fell into the clutches of the Wyrms and transformed into the perversions of Garou we now know as Black Spiral Dancers, they lost the patronage of Rorg and disappeared from our starry pantheon. We suspect, however, that the Wyrms-spirits that lurk in the Deep Umbra petitioned a great dark power to serve as the new patron for these corrupt Garou. Our legends speak only vaguely of Yakecen, the Fallen Singer, a black hole that lies somewhere

in the most distant corner of the Aetherial Realm, not far from an anchorhead that connects with Malfeas.

Astronomers claim that a black hole results when the explosion of a gigantic star creates a whirlpool of gravity so dense that it absorbs, rather than reflects light and pulls everything within its sphere of influence into its gaping maw. Nothing, the astronomers say, can emerge from such an aberration of the cosmos.

Our own students of the stars say differently. Some members of the Sept of the Stars, myself included, believe that something *has* emerged from such a black hole. The Red Star, which has appeared recently in the Umbra and has caused shock waves of fear and trepidation throughout the Aetherial Realm, came from "nowhere" — which is as appropriate a description of the region around a black hole as any I can think of.

We have no proof that the star we call Anthelios derives from the distant region our legends refer to as belonging to Yakecen. Nevertheless, the signs and portents indicate that the Fallen Singer has gifted us with its own song of mass destruction.

### *Yaraan-Doo, The Dying One*

So little lore remains to us of the Bunyip, once the indigenous Garou of Australia and New Zealand. The most we can discover about the tribe whose blood stains our collective hands comes from the legends of the few remaining Aborigines of Australia's interior. In the absence of concrete knowledge of the legends of the Bunyip, we have allocated the constellation known to us as the Southern Cross and called Yaraan-Doo by the Aborigines to the memory of the Bunyip.

According to Aboriginal lore, the Southern Cross (or white gum tree) commemorates the coming of death to humankind. For us, it seems appropriate that we link this memorial of death to the Bunyip.

### *First Change Astrology*

Some Garou believe that the date of your First Change has more significance than your birthday. After all, your life as a Garou — your birth as one of Gaia's Changing Children — begins only when you make your first physical transformation. Then again, others say this is nonsense. After all, it seems that the First Change is less foreordained for a specific date, as it can be triggered by rage. I believe that both "signs" are important to us, since we possess two natures: human or animal and Garou.

The basic attributes that apply to your birth "sign" also apply to your First Change sign. If your birth and First Change signs coincide, then you may well experience an amplified version of the traits associated with your patron. A Garou born under the patronage of Nerigal and who also undergoes her First Change during Nerigal's portion of the lunar year may exhibit an extreme tendency for competition. On the other hand, a Garou who experiences a similar doubling of Sokhta's influence may take an excessive delight in projecting an aura of mystery.



## Astrology and the Changing Breeds

The other Changing Breeds have their own manner of viewing the stars and their influence. Like the Garou, they feel a keen connection to the natural world, though they do not spend as much time (with the exception of the Corax and the Nuwisha) roaming the Umbral Realms. Their perceptions of the planetary Incarnae reflect their special concerns.

- **Ananasi:** The spider-folk have a very limited relationship to the stars; their preference for following the dictates of the Triat rather than Gaia don't put them on very good terms with most of the planetary Incarnae. Although several of them colloquially refer to the vault of the night sky as "the Weaver's loom," they place little value on the relationship between the stars and their own birth. What's more, a proper horoscope for one of the werespiders might have to take into account the "birthdate" of each spider they'd ever absorbed into their own form. The only positive stellar relationship they have is with Shantar, who sees something of herself in the busy Ananasi. Even so, it's rare to find any werespiders in the Loom Maker's court. The Ananasi associate their fate with that of their queen, and with no external influences.

- **Bastet:** The feline changers have an intimate connection to Luna, whom they recognize as Seline. Furthermore, despite their tenuous connections to the Umbra, they recognize many of the planets by their own names — Akhnet (Mars), Sabaal (Venus), Jurima (Mercury), Divaah (Jupiter), Pah (Saturn), Siku (Uranus), Liau (Neptune) and Kwa (Pluto). Their ties to the planetary Incarnae are as varied as those of the Garou, although the Bastet don't seem to acknowledge Hakahe and keep well away from Rorg. Tambiyah in particular is fond of Cat's children, and will treat them well when they manage to visit her in Sabaal's guise — presuming that they aren't too prideful to be polite.

- **Corax:** Raven's children have a deep-seated connection with Helios in all his forms. That said, they have little time for the spirits of the night sky; daytime is their province, and they are much more focused on earthbound affairs. A few of them watch the skies for the position of Corvus; the constellation that honors Apollo's raven of prophecy may not have been accidentally named. At best, the wereravens acknowledge a minor tie to Mitau, and through him Gemini — the constellation of the celestial twins is to them the embodiment of Hugin and Munin, Odin's twin ravens and forefathers to the race. Even so, their first loyalty is to Helios and Gaia — more than enough to keep them busy.

- **Gurahl:** Bear's children have many stories about Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, both important figures in Gurahl cosmology. In addition, the children of Bear honor Polaris, Sirius and the Pleiades. Gurahl also look to Serpentarius, the Healer for celestial guidance. It's no surprise that the werewolves honor no particular planet over their home, though; Eshtarra is their patron among the planetary Incarnae, further reinforcing their close ties with the Earth.

- **Kitsune:** The fox-folk have adopted many systems of astrology to guide them — appropriate, given that they've also scavenged sorceries and occult lore from every other

source they could find. Most of their Doshi are loyal to Eastern astrology patterns, although they gladly trace Western star-patterns whenever they feel it important. The werefoxes have quietly ventured to just about all of the planetary Incarnae's courts in efforts to curry favor, but so far no particular one has chosen to adopt the Kitsune as particular children. Even so, the Kitsune have managed to work their way into Ruatma's heart, and he will often bless his would-be protégés with yet another secret magic for their use. Needless to say, they are always very grateful.

- **Mokolé:** Like the Corax, the great changing lizards bask in the attention and favor of Helios and Katanka-Sonnak both. While they do not pay much attention to the stars, the Mokolé do acknowledge that it is good that the humans have placed a dragon among the constellations, and a few of the night-born pay Draco some lip service.

- **Nagah:** The secretive wereserpents are far from the knowledge of most Gaian spirits save the Wani. The planetary Incarnae are no closer to them, nor are the spirits of the Aetherial vault — the Nagah's work is in the physical realm. The sole exception is Hakahe, the Ebon Whisperer, whose purview over secrets and hidden nature has placed him closer to the wereserpents. He knows that they still live, and will not betray that knowledge. In return, the Nagah have accorded Hakahe "honorary Wani" status — to them, he is Musilinga the Hidden, who helps shelter them with the spread of his ebon hood.

- **Nuwisha:** If Coyote's children have a true interest in the heavens, it's in trying to regain Luna's favor. They are most humble (well, as humble as Nuwisha get) when dealing with Luna, Sokhta or any of the moon's other faces — but when visiting the other planetary Incarnae, it's usually to see what they can cozen out of the mighty spirits. As such, the Nuwisha have no particular allies among the Star-spirits, although Mitau is greatly amused by their antics.

- **Ratkin:** The children of Rat rarely notice the stars, and are generally bitter whenever the subject of predestination is brought up anyway. (It tends to remind them of their persecution; of course, just about *anything* reminds a Ratkin of his personal persecution, real or imagined.) They recognize some of the stars by their own names, calling the Pleiades the Whiskers of the Rat and referring to Polaris as the Eye of the Rat God. If they have any allies among the planetary Incarnae, it's most likely that they have found favor in Rorg's eyes — the apocalyptic plans of the Ratkin, as well as their "strength in numbers" philosophy, go well with Rorg's ideals.

- **Rokea:** The Rokea do not acknowledge the influence of the stars — unsurprising, given that the race has taken to calling the sun itself "the Wound." Oversea is a mystery to all but the eldest among the weresharks, and even they tend to believe that the affairs of Oversea are none of their business. Their isolationist nature can perhaps be excused — after all, the Rokea have much more territory to patrol than does any other Changing Breed, and therefore less time to go wandering in the stars.

## Planetary Aspects: An Alternate Astrology

Some Stargazers developed a relatively simple method of determining the influence of the nearest (relatively speaking) Celestines in the lives of Garou. Basing their interpretations on the positions of Mercury, Mars, Venus and Jupiter, the four planets that are visible at night to the naked eye, the recorders of planetary aspects take into account the influence of the Celestines that rule these planets. Be warned that this is not as exact or reliable as our own knowledge of the lunar cycle; the Celestines of the other planets are greater, more unknowable than the planetary Incarna we know, and as far from Gaia's breast as are the Triat.

Each planet has three aspects — Rising, Midsky and Descending. If Mercury appears between the eastern horizon and the midpoint of the sky at the time of your birth, you can claim you have "Mercury Rising." It is possible (though highly unlikely) for all four planets to be "rising" for an individual, however, most Garou have one or two planets in each category.

Rising aspects generally bode favorably for Garou who possess them, while Descending aspects imply some sort of fault or risk. Midsky aspects contain both positive and negative elements or else have a neutral quality to their effect. (Chapter Five contains information on specific Merits and Flaws attached to Planetary Aspects as well as many other practical "in-game" applications for astrological signs.)

## Western Astrology Through Garou Eyes

There are some interesting aspects about Western astrology which translate smoothly to Garou lunar astrology. It is possible to make a correlation between the division of the zodiac into Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable signs and a similar division of the Garou 12-month cycle along the lines of the Triat.

According to Western astrology, Cardinal signs occur at the beginning of each season and indicate the energy of a new beginning. Fixed signs comprise the mid-point of each season and embody steadiness and immutability. Mutable signs signify the end of a season and represent the transition from one season to another — or the "destruction" of a season in favor of the "creation" of a new one.

For Garou, this division can easily apply to the Triat of Wyld (Cardinal), Weaver (Fixed) and Wyrn (Mutable). In doing so, however, it is important to remember that the Wyrn was not always a force for total annihilation and corruption. The attribution of four of the lunar signs to the Wyrn refers to that being's original place at the end of a cycle of creation and destruction.

### Wyld Signs: Energy in Potential

The beginnings of the seasons fall during the lunar months associated with the Wyld. Although the vernal equinox occurs before the onset of the lunar month associated with Nerigal, the Ice Warrior presides over the early part of spring. Likewise, Sokhta rules the young summer, Tambiyah oversees the first fruits of autumn and Lubat watches over the onset of winter.

### Weaver Signs: Energy Actualized

The middle of each season belongs to the Weaver. At these times, each season rests in the fullness of its essence. The patterns of each season remain fixed and steadfast. Mid-spring falls under the aegis of Eshtarra, the Songteller. Katanka-Sonnak presides over mid-summer, while Meros rules the middle portion of autumn. Ruatma holds forth over the deepest part of winter.

### Wyrn Signs: Energy in Abeyance

The last month of each season bears traces of the next. The Wyrn, who rules over the breaking down of patterns, oversees the transition from season to season. Thus, Mitanu presides over the end of spring and the arrival of summer. Hakahe watches as summer devolves into autumn. Zarok



guides the transit from autumn to winter, while Shantar rules the decay of winter and the birth of spring.

## *The Great Cycle of the Years: Chinese Astrology*

Unlike western astrology, which emphasizes the birth month, Chinese astrology takes into account the year of birth. The Chinese zodiac encompasses 12 animals, each of which rules for a full year. Thus, those who were born in 1960, 1972, 1984, or 1996 fall under the sign of the Rat. Naturally, this isn't exactly precise with Western calendars; the Chinese New Year falls sometime between late January and mid-February, after all.

In addition to the standard interpretations of the Chinese zodiac, we have our own version of the effects of each sign based on the interaction between a particular year's ruling animal and the Garou moon-based auspices. Much of this lore comes from the voluminous recollections of Star-gazer Galliards, but I wouldn't be surprised if our Eastern cousins have contributed to these observations.

### *Rat: Honesty, Sociability and Manipulation*

As the most aggressive of the signs, Rat exhibits a straightforwardness in his dealings that frequently gains the respect and affection of others. Unfortunately, Rat can also succumb to the desire to manipulate people to achieve his own ends; it's a common legend that Rat managed to trick Ox out of his place at the front of the zodiac.

Ahroun Garou born in the Year of the Rat make excellent front-line warriors and good team leaders. Rat-year Theurges openly admit their need to unearth the secrets of the universe and pursue their goal with a single-minded directness. Ragabash Garou born under the sign of the Rat enjoy simple yet effective

tricks and ruses. Rat-born Galliards prefer to "get to the point" of their tales and songs, avoiding excessive embellishments in their delivery, and Rat's Philodox are opinionated and sometimes brutally frank in their judgments.

### *Ox: Patience, Pride and Stubbornness*

Ox exemplifies the qualities of endurance and dignity. As a lover of tradition and preserver of harmony, he sometimes seems stodgy and less than original in his thinking. Ox suffers from intractability and an unwillingness to change his mind.

Ahroun Garou who fall under Ox's influence employ tried and true methods of combat and excel in outlasting their foes. Ox-born Theurges plow through copious amounts of information in order to uncover one new insight. Philodox born during the Year of the Ox simply wear down their opposition with reasoned and relentless arguments. Ox-governed Galliards enjoy the old songs and stories and often perform them in the purest possible form. Ragabash ruled by Ox tend toward self-deprecating humor and pranks.

### *Tiger: Generosity, Courage and Vanity*

Tiger lavishes gifts from his own considerable store on those he cherishes. His courage rarely deserts him, even in the face of insurmountable odds. Tiger's primary weakness, however, is his vanity, which can render him insufferable in the worst of circumstances.

Ahroun ruled by Tiger take great risks in combat, not because they are gamblers but because they cannot concede the idea of showing cowardice. Tiger Theurges willingly share their knowledge with others who might make use of it. Philodox born under Tiger's influence temper their judgments and rulings with a generosity of spirit that shrinks from narrow interpretations of laws or traditions. Tiger's Galliards enjoy listening to the songs of others as much as they love their own time in the spotlight. Tiger-born Ragabash sometimes plan elaborate pranks with dramatic results.

### *Table of Years*

Rat	1948	1960	1972	1984	1996
Ox	1949	1961	1973	1985	1997
Tiger	1950	1962	1974	1986	1998
Cat (or Rabbit)	1951	1963	1975	1987	1999
Dragon	1952	1964	1976	1988	2000
Snake	1953	1965	1977	1989	2001
Horse	1954	1966	1978	1990	2002
Goat (or Sheep)	1955	1967	1979	1991	2003
Monkey	1956	1968	1980	1992	2004
Rooster	1957	1969	1981	1993	2005
Dog	1958	1970	1982	1994	2006
Pig	1959	1971	1983	1995	2007

In order to figure out the signs for years outside this table, simply add or subtract 12 to the desired year until the number falls within the table's parameters.





### ***Cat (Rabbit): Discretion, Cleverness and Distance***

Cat prides herself on her discretion and cleverness. She is a consummate diplomat and agile thinker who wins friends and supporters through her tact and charm. However, Cat rarely risks her own emotions, maintaining a cool distance even from those closest to her.

Ahroun Garou born in the Year of the Cat demonstrate a distinct preference for indirect methods of warfare. They are not cowards; rather, they can think of many different ways to attack an opponent that do not involve direct frontal assault. Theurges ruled by Cat seem highly attuned to subtle emanations and often "feel" rather than "know" the way to knowledge. Cat-born Philodox often extract fine points of order upon which to base their judgments, while Galliards ruled by Cat rarely exceed the boundaries of good taste. Ragabash born during the Year of the Cat demonstrate a remarkable cleverness in their pranks and rarely get blamed for any trouble they cause.

### ***Dragon: Intuition, Artistry and Willfulness***

Dragon intuitively knows what most people spend a lifetime learning. His artistic talents arouse both admiration and envy in others. Unfortunately, Dragon has a strong willful streak and too often insists on having his own way despite the consequences.

Dragon Ahroun make uncanny fighters, seeming to know their enemies' movements even before their foes do. Dragon-born Theurges take naturally to learning Gifts and performing rites; obscure bits of information fall into their laps without noticeable effort. Philodox born in the Year of the Dragon use their instincts to good effect in rendering judgments, while Dragon Galliards exhibit a rare artistry in their performances. Dragon Ragabash seem to know the most effective pranks and tailor their actions to fit their victims.

### ***Snake: Wisdom, Compassion and Laziness***

Noted for her wisdom, Snake represents learning put to its best purposes. Compassion accompanies wisdom, making Snake a valuable companion and sympathetic friend. Snake's weakness lies in her tendency toward laziness.

Snake-born Ahroun excel at the rapid strike and the pin-point assault. Theurges born in the Year of the Snake value the wisdom of the ancients above all, while Philodox ruled by Snake have a reputation for uncommonly wise judgments, even in the trickiest situations. Snake-born Galliards seem to know what songs to sing or stories to tell and can often evoke great emotion by their heartfelt performances. Ragabash ruled by Snake rarely cause real harm to the victims of their tricks.

## ***Horse: Eloquence, Athleticism and Selfishness***

Horse communicates with an eloquence born from an innate self-confidence and sure-mindedness. Graceful and athletic, Horse revels in physical activity. His greatest weakness comes from a preoccupation with self.

Ahroun born in the Year of the Horse relish physical combat above all other kinds of martial activity. Horse Theurges have a knack for acquiring Gifts from spirits through the sheer force of their elegantly worded pleas. Philodox born under Horse's influence rarely encounter dissension when they render difficult judgments due to their ability to argue their cases convincingly. Galliards ruled by Horse perform their songs and stories with grace and style, while Horse-born Ragabash favor physical pranks over mental trickery.

## ***Goat (Sheep): Intelligence, Gentleness and Capriciousness***

One of the gentlest of signs, Goat's reputation for mild-mannered behavior often leads others to take advantage of her. Her intelligence, however, more than makes up for her apparent meekness. Her greatest weakness lies in her frequently capricious nature.

Goat-born Ahroun tend to fight only when necessary and then make a point of using the minimum necessary force. Theurges born in the Year of the Goat favor the Gifts related to healing and protection. Goat-born Philodox make intelligent decisions, but often show mercy to all but the most recalcitrant miscreants. Galliards born under Goat's influence perform with great artistry and intelligence, while Goat-born Ragabash content themselves with minor tricks and harmless pranks.

## ***Monkey: Inventiveness, Independence and Opportunism***

Monkey radiates inventiveness, always coming up with new and improved ways of doing things. Her independent nature, however, sometimes leads her down lonely paths; fortunately, she doesn't mind being one step ahead of the crowd. Monkey's chief flaw consists of a ruthless opportunism that drives her to succeed at the expense of others.

Ahroun born under the Monkey's influence bring their knack for invention to the battleground. Monkey Theurges tend to undertake solitary quests for knowledge, while Philodox hold to their own judgments even in the face of overwhelming dissension. Monkey-born Galliards tend to "improve" on traditional songs and stories, adding new verses or changing the ends of tales. Ragabash born during the Year of the Monkey seek new ways to play old tricks.

## ***Rooster: Divacity, Adventurousness and Pomposity***

Rooster project a vivacious personality and an adventurous spirit. His zest for living infects all around him. He can, however, descend into didacticism and pomposity.

Rooster Ahroun tend to rush headlong into battle, howling boasts all the way. Theurges born in the Year of the Rooster seek out unknown paths to follow. Rooster Philodox use their enthusiasm to bring others around to their side, while Rooster-born Galliards often experiment with new styles of performance. Ragabash Garou influenced by Rooster often risk their own necks in the pursuit of trickery.

## ***Dog: Nobility, Devotion and Pessimism***

One of the noblest signs, Dog enjoys a reputation for devotion and steadfast loyalty. She never lets her friends down and exemplifies all that is worthy and true. Unfortunately, Dog also has a tendency to see the dark side of circumstances, drowning in extreme pessimism.

Ahroun born in the Year of the Dog make ideal support troops and comrades in battle. Dog-born Theurges apply their devotion to their quest for knowledge, while Philodox ruled by Dog appeal to the higher instincts of others when passing judgment. Dog Galliards relish songs and stories that feature great heroes and selfless actions, while Ragabash born under the influence of Dog rarely play tricks on their close friends.

## ***Pig: Truthfulness, Sensuality and Gullibility***

Pig seldom lies, even when it would be to her advantage to do so. She exudes a vital sensuality that makes her attractive to both sexes. She can, however, display a tendency toward gullibility that makes her an easy mark for less scrupulous individuals.

Ahroun born in the Year of the Pig seldom hide their intentions; they prefer direct attacks over stealthy actions. Pig Theurges refuse to dissemble when seeking knowledge. Philodox born under the influence of Pig make certain that their judgments are based on verifiable facts. Pig-born Galliards employ all the senses in their performances, while Ragabash born in the Year of the Pig use truth as a cruel mirror for the foibles of others.

## ***Comets, Eclipses and other Aetherial Objects***

The skies of the Aetherial Realm seem as vast as the earthly heavens they mirror. Besides the planetary Incarnae, a myriad other spirits make their home in this part of the Umbra. Although they do not figure in the Garou lunar zodiac, some of these denizens need mentioning.

## ***Matagar, the Lord of Beginnings***

Known to Western astrology as Sirius, the Dog Star, this lesser Incarna once held great influence over the lands of ancient Egypt. Matagar's appearance in the sky heralded the onset of the flood season of the Nile valley and marked the beginning of a new year and a new planting season. Matagar occupies a small Realm in the vicinity of Zarok,

who considers the lesser Incarna as one of his faithful followers. Matagar watches over beginnings. He also represents loyalty, tenacity and persistence in the hunt.

### *Vegarda, the Lady of the North*

Called Polaris by humans and looked to as a guide by ancient navigators, Vegarda seldom strays from her tiny but potent Realm. Vegarda represents dedication and steadfastness. The Get of Fenris regard the guardian of the North Celestial Pole as the keeper of the World Tree Yggdrasil, while the Children of Gaia see her as the center of the Wheel of Transformation. Stargazers honor Vegarda as the Unmoved Mover. Vegarda sometimes acts as the patron of vision quests and long journeys.

### *Izarra Tarana, the Star Singers*

Grouped together as Izarra Tarana, these lesser Incarnae inhabit the cluster of stars known as the Pleiades in Western mythology and as the Seven Sisters to the people of the Pure Lands. Theirs is to preside over feasts and gatherings. Fianna Kinfolk once used the Star Singers to mark the proper time for their Samhain celebrations. The songs of Izarra Tarana fortify the heart and strengthen the resolve of those Garou who take the time to listen for their melodies while traveling in the Aetherial Realm.

### *Anthelios, the Eye of the Wyrn*

This new star, which has suddenly appeared in the far reaches of the Aetherial Realm, has not yet achieved physical proportions in the material world. Called the Eye of the Wyrn by some Garou, Anthelios looms as a sinister presence in the Umbra. Whatever spirit presides over this Aetherial newcomer has yet to make itself known to the other Incarnae, a fact which greatly disturbs the planetary spirits. As Anthelios gains in substance within the Aetherial Realm, it may eventually burst into the material world; what form its coming will take remains the subject of much concerned speculation.

### *Comets and Meteors*

Human history links the appearance of comets in the heavens with significant, usually catastrophic, events on Earth. Comets cause an increase in Rage among Garou when first seen in the heavens. Once, many Garou believed that comets served as the vehicles for Wyrn spirits, allowing them passage through the Aetherial Realm as their fiery hosts streaked through the physical skies. After long study, including journeys into the outer edges of the Aetherial Realm, the Sept of the Stars has concluded that these perpetual travelers embody aspects of all three members of the Triat. Born from the death of planets or asteroids and capable of vast destruction, comets collect the negative energy of the Wyrn. As potential dispersers of the seeds of life throughout the galaxy, comets share a kinship with the Wyld's creative impulses. The regular paths of comets and the predictability of their visits associates them with the Weaver.

Although a few Garou seek out the regions of the Aetherial Realm through which comets pass in the hopes of

communicating with the spirits of Halley's Comet, Comet Kohoutek, Comet Hale-Bopp and their cousins, these beings seem reluctant to make their purposes known. They remain objects of wonder and speculation for both the Garou and for humankind.

The appearance of meteor showers such as the Leonids and Perseids also cause concern among both human and Garou populations. In the Aetherial Realm, meteor showers appear as fiery sparks of energy, exploding across the vast spaces of the Umbra only to disappear almost as soon as they emerge. Some meteor sparks contain balefire while others constitute surges of Wyld energy. The Sept of the Stars has made many attempts to capture the Gaffling spirits that seem to cling to the cosmic debris that makes up a meteor shower in order to discover why these celestial fireworks seem to emanate from either Wyrn or Wyld sources.

### *Auroras Borealis and Australis*

The phenomena we call the Northern and Southern Lights shimmer like soft, iridescent veils in the Aetherial Realm. Illuminated by the solar winds of Katanka-Sonnak, these curtains of energy serve as outriders for the Wind Rider and as bearers of messages from him to Eshtarra's domain.

### *Astrology and Necessity*

Despite everything you have heard, you may have some doubts as to just how useful this knowledge can be in the face of the impending Apocalypse. Again, I fear you've seen too much of the "armchair enlightenment" that human newspapers and would-be gurus hawk to the confused and empty.

I need only take you further into the Umbra and point out to you the eerie, malevolent glow of Anthelios to illustrate the necessity of understanding the messages from the heavens. Astrology provides a common language with which we can speak with the Celestines on their own terms.

Astrology as practiced by humans in the material world suffers from a paucity of understanding. The modern world has gone to great lengths to prove astrology wrong and substitute the complex facts of astronomy for the vibrancy of a universe populated by living spirits of stars and planets. Those that do believe, all too often go in search of easy answers or learn to read the stars in order to turn a profit.

All I can say to you in closing is this: In the Umbra, the Celestines manifest themselves as supreme rulers of the Aetherial realm. In order to combat the Wyrn in the final days, we need the assistance of these powerful spirits. Gaia is the center of our world, but we are but one planet in an immense material and Umbral cosmos. The Apocalypse does not just threaten Earth; it impinges on the entire Tellurian. The Wyrn does not just want to destroy Gaia, he wishes to devour all that is, was and will be.

So, take my words to heart and make your journeys to the realms of the Celestines. Listen to the omens and portents provided you by the stars' eternal song. Do that, or forget my message and go your own way, hoping that the final days do not catch you unprepared. Choose well.





# Chapter Three: Storytelling: Omens, Signs and Portents

It's a natural temptation to use prophetic visions, omens and supernatural portents as the basis for chronicles or as significant plot devices for the telling of cosmic stories. However, it requires some preparation. First of all, you must prepare a "text" which forms the basis for the prophecy or else come up with a list of omens or signs for the characters to encounter. Second, you need to have a clear idea of how your prophecies relate to your story. Third, you have to allow for the possibility that players will come up with their own interpretations of your signs, symbols, prophesies, dreams or omens — which may not coincide with the interpretations you had planned.

This chapter provides some examples of prophecies, omens and portents that Storytellers can use or adapt to fit their own chronicles. The first of these, *The Prophecy of the Phoenix*, includes text originally published in *Werewolf: the Apocalypse, Second Edition*. The commentary and superscript insertions are new to this sourcebook. Feel free to use these samples as written, to modify them in whole or in part or to use them as guidelines for constructing your own prophetic visions.

## *The Prophecy of the Phoenix, Revisited*

One of the oldest legends of the Garou, *The Prophecy of the Phoenix*, details the seven signs of the coming Apocalypse. In the wake of the appearance of Anthelios, it seems only fitting to return to the source of our best information on the final days and view it with fresh eyes. Here, then, with commentaries that mark the fulfillment of many of the signs, is the Prophecy of the Phoenix.

## *The Prophecy of the Phoenix*

Phoenix took me.  
Carried me in his claws.  
High above the world.  
So that I could see beyond tomorrow.  
And I looked.  
I beheld the future.

I saw the decimation of our kin. Hunted beyond hunting, death beyond death, to the last one. There were no more children, or grandchildren, or fathers, or mothers. This was the first Sign Phoenix gave to me, that the Children of the Weaver, the Humans, would give to us, the Garou.<sup>1</sup>

I looked.  
I beheld the future.

I saw the Children of the Weaver birthing. A great tide of Humans, rising. I saw more and more, until Gaia groaned at having to carry them all. Their houses overrunning, their rakes raping, their hands clawing at the parched earth, trying to feed from Her. This was the second Sign of the last days, that Phoenix showed me, that the Humans would do.<sup>2</sup>

I looked again.  
I beheld the third Sign.

So many. So many children. So many Humans. And they fell against each other, one to one, and the Wyrms brought forth corruption and gave each a measure. And the strange Fire I saw, out of control, the great Plume rising over the wilderness, spreading death wherever it shone in that dark and cold land. And I heard the agony

of the Sea as She keened, for some drunken fool had poured a lake of black death out upon her.<sup>3</sup>

I turned my head away in disgust, but I could not help but look again.

I beheld, then, the fourth Sign.

The Wyrn grew powerful; its wings fanned the breezes of decay. It spread its diseases and they were horrible: the Herd became afflicted with diseases of the head and the blood. Children were born twisted. Animals fell sick and no one could cure them. In these final days, even the Warriors of Gaia could not escape the palsied talons of the sickness-bringing deathbird.<sup>4</sup>

A tear in my eye, I looked again, and the Phoenix showed me the fifth Sign.

I saw other Plumes rising like death-spears toward the beautiful sky, piercing it, letting Father Sun burn and parch Gaia. The air grew hot; even in the darkness of Winter it was warm. The plants withered in the sun. A cry of pain and disease arose from the dying forests; as one the relations cried tears of mourning.<sup>5</sup>

Then, as though a veil were torn, the sixth Sign showed itself to me.

In these last days, Gaia shakes in rage. Fire boils from the depths. Ash shrouds the sky.<sup>6</sup> The Wyrn skulks in the shadows made by these... and rears to strike.<sup>7</sup> The old ones are gone; the Guardians of the Pathways and the Crossroads are finished.<sup>8</sup> In these final days, the sixth Sign will make itself known in the Packs that form. Each Pack will have unto itself a Quest, a Sacred Journey it must perform.<sup>9</sup> Such is the will of Gaia.

And I saw the sky turn black, and the moon was as blood.<sup>10</sup>

And the seventh Sign I glimpsed, though I could not look on it in full. But its heat I could feel.

The Apocalypse. The final days of the world. The Moon was swallowed by the Sun, and it burned in His belly.<sup>11</sup> Unholy fires fell to the ground, burning us all, twisting us and making us vomit blood.<sup>12</sup> The Wyrn made itself manifest in the towers and the rivers and the air and the land, and everywhere its children ran rampant, devouring, destroying, calling down curses of every kind.<sup>13</sup> And the Herd ran in fear. And the Dark Ones, children of the Wyrn, crawled from their caves and walked the streets in daylight.<sup>14</sup>

I turned my head from the sight. Phoenix told me: "This is as it shall be, but not as it should."<sup>15</sup>

Phoenix left me then.

Now, I cannot dream. I can only remember the Signs, each one in perfect detail. These are the last days. May Gaia have mercy on us.

## Commentaries On the Signs of the Last Days

Many Garou elders have pored over the words contained in The Prophecy of the Phoenix. I am certainly not the first, nor will I be the last. Yet all who hear this ancient song find new warnings in its words.

In a sense, I am merely reiterating the work of other Galliards in my explications of the Signs. However, mine is the decision to put the words on paper, on electronic disk, in defiance of the old traditions. I firmly believe that each of us who reads the Prophecy in the spirit of reverence and discovery

will peel back one more layer of meaning from this harrowing vision granted to one of our own so long ago. Read. Understand. Question. And defend the words.

1. This Sign undoubtedly refers to the slow dwindling in numbers of the Garou as the result of the ascending power of humans.

2. The second Sign indicates a two-fold manifestation: overpopulation and famine. If the Prophecy presents the Signs in roughly chronological order, then the crowding and starvation detailed in its words indicates the rapid growth of post-medieval society following the first outbreak of Inquisitorial persecution. Indeed, great famines have plagued much of human history. The previous century included the Irish Potato Famine of 1848 as well as the Russian famine of 1891 and other similar disasters that did not receive as much attention. In the 20th century, famine has become a constant in some parts of the world. The widespread starvation in the Soviet Union under Stalin in the 1930s, the continuing lack of food in Africa, widespread famine throughout Asia, the Middle East and Africa does not diminish.

3. Most other commentaries on this section agree that the Third Sign refers to notable disasters of the current century. The "great Plume rising over the wilderness" seems to describe the 1986 accident at Chernobyl ("that dark and cold land"), while the "lake of black death" poured upon the sea most likely refers to the Exxon-Valdez oil spill of 1989, although the Endron Pequod incident at the Great Barrier Reef is at least as convincing. Even before these atrocities, however, the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as the rampant nuclear testing of the 1950s sent literal "plumes" of fire into the atmosphere, poisoning the air. This section, therefore, in all probability, resonates with an entire body of environmental depredations involving radiation and toxic pollution.

4. Disease and deformities have always rampaged through societies afflicted with overpopulation, poor sanitation and irresponsible breeding. The last two decades, however, have seen the appearance of many epidemics and pandemics that fit the parameters of this portion of the Prophecy. AIDS immediately springs to mind, but the outbreak of ebola and other megaviruses, the incidents of "mad-cow" disease in parts of Europe and the systematic poisoning of meat-animals through the use of chemical preservatives also qualify as *bona fide* instances of "diseases of the head and the blood." Some commentators have expressed the opinion that this portion of the Prophecy also alludes to the Silver Fangs' "affliction." My immediate reaction of denial must, I fear, admit to the slight possibility that these observations may have some accuracy.

5. The fifth Sign concurs with the symptoms of global warming and the destruction of the ozone layer, fatal blows to the environment and the ecosystem of the planet. The burning of the rain forests and the prevalence of drought (causing more famine) also seem to fall into this section of the Prophecy. With this manifestation of the Signs, we move steadily into transglobal catastrophe, affecting not just the human population of Earth but the entire body of living creatures and the physical structure of the world.

6. This Sign finds its realization in a plethora of natural disasters that have literally altered the face of Gaia. The increasing incidence of major earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves,



floods, hurricanes and other cataclysmic events in the latter half of this century seems to indicate Gaia's attempt to shake off the worrisome parasites that have imposed a death sentence upon her. The alteration of weather patterns, which some scientists believe presages a new Ice Age and others claim foretells a massive warming of the planet — either of which could result in the extinction of the current evolutionary paths — indicates that a massive change looms on the horizon.

7. Up to this point, the explications of the Signs have presented little problem for the observant and intelligent commentator (and I hope I fall into this category). The imagery employed by the author(s) of the Prophecy seems fairly explicit in its reference to disasters that affect the human and animal populations and the physical environment. With the oblique reference to the Wyrms [who] "skulks in the shadows made by these...and rears to strike," we fall into the realm of conjecture. The Signs up to this point have described what, to us, are past or current events. Now, in the midst of the complex sixth Sign, we move into the future and things become less clear. The ellipsis (...) presents an enigmatic problem, as it represents the only significant spoken pause in the body of the Prophecy. I do not know whether the pause merely indicates a dramatic effect, or whether it represents a forgotten portion of the original recitation — perhaps only a single word but more likely an entire phrase. I, therefore, find it necessary to present two possible explanations of this mention of the Wyrms. The first analysis assumes that the pause is merely a formal conceit and that "Wyrms" refers to a general increase in the number of Wyrms-spawned creatures — fomori, serial killers, lunatics and hate-filled individuals or groups — who flourish in the wake of disasters. This interpretation would include looters who take advantage of floods, earthquakes, riots and other breakdowns of civilization as well as "lone gunmen" whose minds have snapped under pressure or through corruption by agents of the Wyrms. The second interpretation, however, posits a missing segment of the Prophecy where the pause occurs. If this is the case, then something specific "rears to strike." My instincts lead me to the second interpretation. The traumatic disruption of the fabric of the earth itself caused by earthquakes, tidal waves and other "natural" disasters may, in fact, loose ancient creatures of the Wyrms that have lain dormant or bound for centuries. Who knows what foul Banes or ancient Wyrmspawn lurk in the bowels of the earth, awaiting the opportune moment (such as an earthquake or volcanic eruption) to break free from its chains?

8. This sentence presents another problematic piece of text. The references to "old ones," and the "Guardians of the Pathways and Crossroads" beg for identification with specific groups. "Old ones" might simply refer to the heroes of the past, who no longer walk the earth in physical form. The Guardians, however, seem to indicate a specific group of sentries or watchers. One possible interpretation brings great fear to my heart. The Aetherial Realm stands as the Crossroads of the Umbra; within it lie the Pathways (or bridges) to other realms and anchorheads. If the Guardians are "finished," as the Prophecy states, then the Pathways and Crossroads lie undefended from invasion by the legions of the Wyrms. And something *has* invaded the Aetherial realm — in the form of the Red Star called Anthelios or the Eye of the Wyrms.

9. The reference here to packs that form in response to the unfolding of the sixth Sign reflects a phenomenon that has already manifested: more and more often, multiracial packs are coming together as the result of some sort of mystical summoning or in answer to a vision or dream-message. There is no way to compile accurate statistics on "the ratio of numbers of packs to numbers of *quested* packs since the beginning of time," but it seems that special packs arise with increasing frequency now.

10. Many prophecies contain phrases such as this, and some commentators dismiss this phrase as visionary "window dressing." I think those worthy scholars err in their casual attitude toward a sentence that stands alone within the body of the text. If we read this sentence in context, as following from the preceding statements about "Pathways and Crossroads" without "Guardians" and numerous packs undertaking "Sacred Journeys," then we realize that this statement does not concern the physical sky and moon at all. The black sky and bloody moon cited in this part of the Prophecy refers to the Umbral sky and the realm of Luna in the Aetherial Realm. This statement stands, in effect, as a declaration of war by an invading force (I refer you to Anthelios, above).

11. Again, this phrase either refers to a cosmic event of cataclysmic proportions — the snapping of the moon from its orbit and its plummet through space into the inferno of the sun — or else it describes an Umbral occurrence. My interpretation proposes that this sentence predicts a war in the Umbra between Luna and Helios, who have somehow been turned irrevocably against one another — possibly by a corrupting Wyrms spirit. That Umbral events mirror or, in some cases, cause incidents on Earth also indicates that both circumstances might come to pass. The physical moon could break free — or be broken free — to plunge headlong into the sun, while, in the Umbra, Luna and Helios confront each other in a cosmic war which can only spell disaster.

12. The "unholy fires" of this portion of the Prophecy may have both a physical and an Umbral component. The absence of the ozone layer and the thinning of earth's protective atmosphere leave the planet vulnerable to actual strikes by meteors. If those pieces of cosmic dust fail somehow to burn up as they enter the atmosphere, they can not only ignite the areas where they make planetfall but also poison the earth with their radioactive mineral content. Radiation sickness causes the victim to vomit blood, as the last part of the sentence confirms. The "unholy fires" could also refer to outbreaks of nuclear war — whether global or limited. Again, the resulting radiation would sicken those within the radius of its effect. As an Umbral phenomenon, if a Celestial war does occur between Helios and Luna, then the weapons used by Helios would — by their very nature — consist of flaming matter or the Umbral equivalent of solar flares.

13. This segment of the Prophecy (and the one which follows) seem to encompass not just the Apocalypse as revealed to the Garou but also the final days of other supernatural groups and indicates a cosmic link between the two. The children of the Wyrms called vampires also, it seems, have their legends of Doomsday. This particular reference to the Wyrms' manifestation in "the towers and the rivers and the air and the land" may refer to the emergence of the vampires from their period of hiding. It also may reflect the increasing boldness and brazenness of such agents of the Wyrms as Pentex, which grows ever



more blatant in its manipulation of human society. In essence, this part of the Prophecy seems to indicate a coming reign of terror, orchestrated by the combined armies of the Wyrms.

14. The reference to the "Dark Ones" who crawled from their caves and walked the streets in daylight" may refer to a rumored conspiracy (spoken of only in whispers) that involves a sinister secret society of Garou and a clan of Leeches. The purpose of this plot, or so my contacts theorize, involves discovering a way to blot out the light of the sun, bringing about a state of eternal darkness. Under these circumstances, even creatures to whom the light of the sun is inimical could walk freely under the sky during the daylight hours (though the word "daylight" might no longer apply in such a situation).

15. This faint promise provides the only glimmer of hope in an otherwise dismal prophecy. In this sentence, the Phoenix implies that the future outlined in the prophecy should not come to pass, but that it *will* occur unless something happens to stop it. Each sign acts as a warning that the Apocalypse grows nearer; the fulfillment of each sign ups the stakes exponentially. We are now at the point where the last of the signs mentioned in the Prophecy begin to unfold. Unless we can discover how to halt the course of events and change the direction of the future, we can only await the final confrontation with knowledge that we shall lose the war of the Apocalypse. The purpose of studying The Prophecy of the Phoenix lies not so much in correctly interpreting it but in

unearthing the means to circumvent it. May this happen in our generation, for there may not be another one to take our place.

— from the private papers of Tamara Seeks the Truth, Silver Fang Galliard and Apocalypse scholar

## *The Forgotten Signs: the Eye of the Wyrms and the Perfect Child*

Not all prophecies come to light in their full form. Occasionally parts of a prophecy become lost or deliberately obscured by those who either want to see the foretold events come to fruition or those who hope to prevent the prophecy from happening.

The Prophecy of the Phoenix lists seven Signs of the coming Apocalypse. Other visions list two more signs: one which foretells the arrival of Anthelios, the Red Star known as the Eye of the Wyrms, and another which portends the birth of a cub from metis parents.

The appearance of Anthelios has thrown those Garou concerned with the workings of prophecies into great consternation. In particular, the Silent Striders possess a verse-fragment revealed to them by Simeon Abd al Hakim, one of their most respected (and least known) Theurges, that links the new star with the coming of the Apocalypse.

The following prophetic pieces come from various sources but all seem to refer to either the Red Star or the metis-born cub.

Some Garou Philodox theorize that, just as direct confrontation with the Wyrms causes insanity in Black Spiral Dancers, so too will the growing influence of Anthelios, the Eye of the Wyrms, cause an increase in madness among both mortals and the Garou. For the Silver Fangs, this possibility spells potential disaster.

## ***The Eye of the Wyrms: The Coming of Anthelios***

*The orb of the Wyrms opens in the heavens, and madness shall rule the skies*

*A rain of terror shall fall in drops of fire and ice, like tears from an ever-weeping eye*

— from the prophesy-visions of Simeon Abd al Hakim, Silent Strider Theurge

## ***The Sun's Destroyer***

*When the solar winds cease their endless journey through the empty spaces, a great cry shall sound, heralding the death of the sun.*

*From the edge of nothing, from within the center of the spiraling void, a harbinger of death shall open its blood-red eye.*

*Destruction precedes its coming,*

*Ruin follows in its wake.*

*This is the first death of the universe — the death of light.*

— Eshtarra's Song

## ***The Perfect Child***

*Two who should not be, in unblest union join, bringing forth one perfect whole, fruitful in form but dark and ill-fated in spirit. Perfect shall the child be called. Damned shall be its mother and father. Doomed or saved shall be the world.*

— from the Death Song of the Croatan

*Child of Yakecen, born in sin*

*Imperfection lies within*

*Wrapped in beauty, filled with Rage*

*Sings the death song of the age*

— from the Vision of Eeyarlach Twice-Born

*And the armies of destruction marched forth, led by the child that should not be and bearing the sign of the eye of the devourer upon its brow. Against that child, nothing could prevail. The heavens shuddered once in sorrow and despair. Then all was still. In the silence which followed, I heard a voice saying, "This is what may come to pass, yet all is not unchanging. Seek, therefore, the child that you may prevent the end of all things."*

— from the Dreams of Guliera Moonsister

## ***The Legend of the Thirteenth Sign***

This prophecy refers not to the "signs" of the Apocalypse, but to the "signs" of the twelve-month lunar calendar of Garou astrology. The "thirteenth" sign is that of Rorg, the Many-Taloned Hunter, whose physical manifestation comprises the

asteroid belt, once the site of a planet which exploded into orbiting pieces of cosmic debris.

*And in the final days, the Many-Taloned Hunter shall cast its talons toward the earth, seeking vengeance on the Wyrms who rent it asunder so long ago, even if that vengeance should threaten all of Gaia's creation.*

*And those who see its fiery claws streak across the skies will quail in terror, knowing that their doom is upon them.*

*Who can heal the hunter's wounds? Who can tame his relentless anger so that his reunion may not come about at the cost of a world?*

*Lo, the many are made one. The legions of dust reform into a raging beast. The world is its prey. Countless are the sins against it. Like grains of sand the stains upon its spirit.*

*Shall the hunter become the hunted in order to end the world's destruction? Who among you will wield the sword to slay the noble victim?*

— from *The Lost Knowledge of the Theurges*

*Claws slash*

*Fangs drink deep*

*Rake the Wyrms' throat*

*Close the Wyrms' eye*

*Shower of blood*

*End of time*

— from the Howls of Mooncaller (Red Talon Galliard), "Cry of the Many-Taloned"

## ***The Children of the Wyrms***

*And in the time before the final days, I saw children arise from the marriage of light and darkness. Scions of the Wyrms, ancient beyond knowing yet newly born, they hovered above the vastness of the world between the worlds, spreading their influence as eagles or vultures spread their wings.*

*From the pits of madness and the heights of glory they came, yet their purpose remained hidden from my sight. I watched their coming and rejoiced; I beheld their arrival and despaired. What is it they seek?*

*In those days, too, I saw a new star herald their coming and heard the cry of a newborn child announcing their arrival. This I saw and heard, and nothing more revealed itself to me.*

— from *The Wanderings of Meros*

## ***Prophecies and Storytelling***

Many stories rely on the use of prophecies, signs and symbols to add depth to their plots. Storytellers who enjoy telling mythic tales need to know the subtle differences between omens, symbols and portents as well as the distinctions between prediction and prophecy.

### ***Omens***

Omens attach significance to occurrences or objects, giving them meanings beyond their surfaces. The sight of a bird flying overhead as you set out on an important journey might bode good or ill depending on several factors: the type of bird, the direction in which the bird is flying and whether or not the bird encounters obstacles — such as a predator or a strong updraft. Actions can serve as omens as well. Breaking a mirror — the proverbial symbol of bad luck — just before stepping



sideways might signify trouble in the Umbra. In general, omens are specific and discrete events or objects.

## Portents

Portents represent the “fuzzy” side of omens. Their manifestations frequently have less physical realities. Dreams provide a rich opportunity for portents, since their surreal landscapes and elusive images often result in residual feelings or moods that may foreshadow future occurrences. “Bad feelings” or a sense that luck is with you also fall under the category of portents.

## Symbols

Symbols involve using one thing to stand for another. Just as words are symbols for the objects they name, symbols form a language of their own. Storytellers can use standard symbolic meanings (i.e. the color red symbolizes blood) or invent their own. Numerous reference materials exist on symbols, giving correspondences for common objects, colors, numbers and other qualities or items. Astrology itself relies on symbology for its effectiveness in predictions and interpretations.

## Prophecy or Prediction?

The distinction between prophesying the future and predicting coming events is a subtle, though important one. Prophecies involve receiving a true vision of the future. This insight into what may come usually takes the form of cryptic messages, poems or poetic prose, or prophetic dreams and visions. Usually, prophecies require interpreting before their meaning becomes apparent. Often this only occurs after the event has transpired. Predictions have a greater risk factor attached to them. Usually those who make predictions about the future are not themselves prophets but individuals skilled in some form of divination. Fortune tellers, astrologers, numerologists and sociologists can to some degree gain insights into the future by reading the cards, stars, numbers or gathering statistics. Their “predictions” consist of a “best guess” estimation of the odds or the omens.

## Prophecies and Storytelling

Using prophecies in a *Werewolf* chronicle adds an extra dimension to storytelling. Characters involved in a prophecy-based story or chronicle become part of a grand design that gradually reveals itself in obscure fragments of poetry, song and story. The framework for *Anthelios Raging* (Chapter Four) centers on the fulfillment of several prophecies — including the legendary Prophecy of the Phoenix. This story can serve as an example for using prophecies, omens, visions, dreams and similar elements in your own stories.

Storytellers should prepare their prophecies beforehand and determine when and under what circumstances their characters may discover or decipher the meaning of these usually cryptic messages. Prophecies can come to light in many different ways, and Storytellers should vary the forms their prophecies take in order to avoid feelings of déjà vu in their characters.



- **Ancient Manuscripts:** This is one of the most common ways to introduce prophecies into a chronicle. Characters with an interest in history or rare books, can come across a volume in the rare books section of a library, tucked away in a used book store, at an auction or in some other fashion. Bear in mind that this isn't the best way to reveal Garou prophecies — werewolves are creatures of oral tradition, and don't write their stories down. It's possible that through Kin or other contacts, a Garou prophecy might find its way into occult manuscripts — but anything gleaned from Garou wisdom and found in a book is undoubtedly third-hand at best.

- **Performances:** Storytellers can have the characters attend a Grand Moot or some other meeting of Garou where they hear a Galliard's performance of a story or song containing a prophetic passage. This gives the Storyteller the chance to recite, sing or read aloud the prophecy for her characters.

- **Dreams:** Dream sequences allow Storytellers to construct mini-dramas filled with symbols and foreshadowing. Recurring phrases heard while dreaming can remain with the characters when they awaken, spurring them to search for the meaning of their nocturnal visitation.

- **Vision Quests:** Characters who go on vision quests in the Umbra or who practice meditation can receive a vision which contains a prophetic message. This is an integral part of many Garou prophecies, as Theurges and Galliards go deep into the Umbra so that the spirits can reveal hidden things to them.

- **Street-corner Prophet:** The characters may encounter a person who walks up to them, spouts a prophetic couplet or verse and then departs, perhaps vanishing mysteriously around a corner or down a dark alley. If this happens several times, characters may decide that they have received some sort of supernatural warning or portent.

Once characters have heard the intended prophecy, they may act on it or research it further. The Storyteller can embellish the initial prophecy with additional verses, paragraphs or contradictory passages. Periodically throughout a prophecy-based story, something should occur which refers to the prophecy or seems a partial fulfillment of it. Characters gradually unravel more and more of the prophecy — often through hindsight ("Oh, *that's what the passage meant!*").

Prophecies need not have only one meaning, nor do they have to be literal descriptions of future events. Oracles frequently speak in symbols or figurative speech, leaving it to the hearers to decipher the meaning of the words. Storytellers should listen to characters as they attempt to interpret the prophecies they come across. If the characters come up with particularly interesting or innovative explanations of cryptic phrases, a Storyteller may use the characters' insights to enrich her own material.

The prophecies contained in this chapter can serve as guides for creating original pieces of prophetic text.

## Storytelling in the Aetherial Realm

Stories that take place in the Aetherial Realm present Storytellers and players with numerous challenges and a wealth of opportunities. While Chapter One details many aspects of the Aetherial Realm, it focuses on the domains of the planetary Incarnae. Each Incarna's realm fronts directly onto the Aetherial Realm though each also has its own Penumbra. Characters do not have to enter the Penumbra of a planet in order to reach the presence of the Incarna. This leaves a lot of room for Storytellers to develop their own ideas about the nature of each planet's (or other celestial body's) Penumbra. For example, the Penumbra of Mars could resemble a landscape from the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs, while Venus' Penumbra could have the aspects of the water world described in C. S. Lewis' *Perelandra*. Characters that enter the Penumbra from the Aetherial Realm must cross a "lesser Gauntlet" (difficulty 4) in order to do so.

In addition, the Aetherial Realm — as a mirror of the universe — contains a host of places not detailed in this sourcebook. Storytellers may even wish to construct Realms for some of the more distant stars such as Alpha Centauri or the Andromeda galaxy. Indeed, the Wagnerians have been searching for another Gaia-spirit far off in the reaches for centuries. You might even want to let them find it — but be careful if you do. The impetus of the Apocalypse is lost if Gaia isn't the only world; in the World of Darkness, there should be no second chances.





# Chapter Four: *Anthelios Raging:* A Story of the Last Days

*For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*  
— Matthew 2:2

## *Introduction*

The appearance of the new star in the Umbra has thrown the denizens of the Aetherial Realm into chaos. As Incarnae begin to amass their forces in preparation for what may well become a cataclysmic war, events on earth also seem to build to a climax. The birth of a perfect cub to a pair of metis Garou — a feat thought impossible due to the curse of sterility borne by all metis (or almost all, it now seems) — heralds a new era in the history of the Garou. Although most werewolves remain ignorant of both the metis-born cub and the appearance of Anthelios in the northern sky, a few groups become keenly aware of one event or the other. Some Garou seek the child to protect it, deeming it a new sign of hope; others desire only to rid the world of what they believe is the cub destined to take up the Wyrms' banner. Some believe that by slaying the metis-born cub, they can prevent — or at least postpone — the Apocalypse. No one knows for certain just what the child represents — but all who seek to gain control of the babe acknowledge its importance in the coming years.

*Anthelios Raging* places a group of player character Garou in the midst of the struggle for possession of the child. Moreover, this story allows Garou characters to discover — and become part of — the war for the cosmos that rages just beneath the surface of everyday events. While many Garou have already won great victories over the Wyrms' minions

— or suffered ignominious defeats at the hands of Gaia's foes, few werewolves have actually ventured behind the scenes onto the vaster battleground of the Aetherial Realm, where stars and planets align themselves in battle formation and prepare to meet the forces of the Wyrms in cosmic war.

*Anthelios Raging* presents an opportunity for Garou characters to do just that and, in so doing, they have the chance to gain Renown (or Infamy) for their actions. No matter what they do, however, some Garou will oppose the characters, heaping scorn and abuse upon them and their reputations. Other Garou will hail the characters as heroes and saviors, singing their praises to Gaia — or to the Wyrms, for such is the ambiguous nature of the burden that falls upon the characters' shoulders.

## *The Plot*

*Anthelios Raging* concerns the events which follow the birth of a cub to two metis parents, a consummation that simply should not be. Not only does this birth defy the first tenet of the Litany, it also constitutes a physical impossibility. Metis, by nature, are unavoidably sterile — unable to either father or conceive children. Furthermore, most Garou believe the unavoidable deformity of the breed stigmatizes

## Setting the Scenes

Many details (such as specific geographic locations) have been deliberately left vague so that the Storyteller can tailor the scenes to fit her own chronicle. In most cases, whether a city scene takes place in downtown New York or small town mid-America doesn't matter so long as the elements basic to the action of the scene are present. It is even possible to set the chronicle in Europe, Australia or South America. Other locales such as rural Africa or parts of Asia may present problems when telling the story, but with customization, the story can take place almost anywhere. Wilderness scenes can occur almost anywhere according to the type of terrain mentioned in the scene.

A portion of the story occurs in the Aetherial Realm and may include a number of Incarnae domains as well as the spirit orrery of the Sept of the Stars. For details regarding these settings, Storytellers should consult Chapter One of this sourcebook as well as *Umbra: The Velvet Shadow*.

them as accursed by Gaia. Logic holds that even if a metis couple could spawn, their child would therefore inherit an overabundance of physical or mental imperfections (assuming it survived to be born at all). This metis-born cub, however, seems flawless — at least on the surface.

It's worth repeating that the events of this story have no "official" conclusion in the World of Darkness. The cub will prove important in the future of the World of Darkness, but it's much more important that it proves important to *your* World of Darkness. This story isn't meant to take the characters along on a sightseeing tour and eventually have them stand helplessly by as a fixed plot requirement plays itself out — they are central to this story. They determine if this cub, whether messiah or right hand of the Wyrms, lives or dies. The fate of the Apocalypse may well depend on their actions.

Rather than presenting a fixed "story-line," *Anthelios Raging* offers a loose framework for Storytellers to use in building their own chronicles involving the metis-born cub and the implications of that event for the Garou. As Storyteller, you can pick and choose from among a number of scenes those most appropriate for your particular story (in addition to creating your own variants).

Of the ideas presented here, use the ones that seem relevant for your chronicle and discard the ones that don't apply. Certain scenes lend themselves to action-adventure stories, while others involve players in a heroes' journey.

The open-ended nature of *Anthelios Raging* should encourage you to decide for yourself just what the metis-born child represents. At this point, even the experts in Garou lore don't fully comprehend the significance of the birth — only that it is significant.

Some Storytellers may wish to come up with their own cast of allies and antagonists in addition to (or instead of)

the ones presented in this chapter and in the Appendix. Crossover stories involving the entirety of the World of Darkness can draw on the fact that many disparate groups have their own legends of the "end times" — such as the anticipated Gehenna of vampire mythology or the Endless Winter prophesied by changelings.

In essence, the bare bones of the story involve a few hard facts: two metis fall in love and produce a child. The child, born in Crinos form and without any obvious flaws, has some special significance connected with the Apocalypse. Simultaneous with the birth of the metis-born cub, a new star appears in the Umbra, one that only the Garou and other supernatural or Awakened creatures can see. The emanations of the new star bleed through into the physical world, though the star has no physical presence there — yet.

The plot revolves around the connection between the metis-born cub, the Red Star and the player characters.

## The Troupe

The Garou characters can involve themselves in the events of *Anthelios Raging* in several ways. They can become guardians of the metis-born cub and take on the responsibility of determining how to raise the child. Alternatively, the characters could support one of the factions opposed to the metis-born; in this case, they would act as antagonists to the parents or guardians of the child. Another possibility allows for them to belong to one of several groups seeking to gain possession of the child after first locating the cub. Finally, players of metis Garou have the option of actually being the parents of the metis-born child (there's certainly an abnormal number of metis pairings out there, based on how many players crow about it on various websites). In this case, the child's fate would gain an intensity often missing from many stories in which characters simply act as facilitators or "heroes."

Of course, your chronicle should already dictate whether or not this last option is a possibility. If there's already a metis couple among the pack, feel free to spring the pregnancy on them as a surprise — as it should be! (At least you certainly don't have to worry about whether they've been using birth control or not....) If there's only one likely metis candidate in the pack, try introducing a potential metis mate for him, and see how that goes. In fact, the longer the time between the inception of the romance and the beginning of this story, the better — that way, the relationship has a chance to grow into something more than a mere plot hook. Make the romance mean something. Then hit them with the plot twist.

Whenever possible, the scenes described below offer suggestions for various roles for the characters. If none of the options or examples apply, the Storyteller and players should create their own possibilities.

## The Nature of the Beast

The significance of the metis-born cub and its relationship (or lack thereof) to the star called Anthelios form the heart of *Anthelios Raging*. Because each chronicle revolves around a particular group of characters, however, it is up to each Storyteller to decide just what the metis-born cub's birth means to her game. This sourcebook provides suggestions but does not give definitive answers, thus enabling Storytellers and players to work together to create their own chronicle of the Apocalypse.

Does the metis-born cub represent the lifting of Gaia's ban on mating between Garou? The dwindling numbers of werewolves in the Last Days and the increasing power of the corrupting influences of the Wyrms may well have brought about a reversal in the long-standing curse of sterility and deformity associated with the birth of a metis Garou. In order to increase the werewolf population, desperate means are necessary — even those that might, under more fortuitous circumstances, eventually result in rampant inbreeding and an increasing distance between the Garou and their human or wolf Kin.

On the other hand, does the metis-born cub epitomize the ultimate corruption of the Garou? Has the Wyrms managed to insinuate itself into the spirit of an apparently "perfect" child in order to strike its greatest enemy — the Garou — from within?

Does the star Anthelios represent the antithesis of Helios, the preserver and sustainer of life? Is it a harbinger of eternal winter? How much time will pass before it assumes material form and appears as a new object in the heavens? What form will Anthelios take when it does materialize? Is it an asteroid of monumental proportions aimed for the earth? Or is it literally a new "star" drawn into the solar system?

Does the metis-born cub have an attunement with Anthelios? This might be the case if child and star represent an unholy alliance against the Garou. Alternately, does the child symbolize a force that can work against Anthelios?

The metis-born cub shows no apparent signs of physical deformities. It's your privilege to decide whether or not the child's seeming perfection conceals a hidden flaw and, if so, the nature of its metis-taint. The child may, in fact, harbor a latent physical imperfection that only makes itself obvious in a form other than Crinos; this fact will not emerge until the child's First Change. The near-perpetual Rage of the cub may, in fact, represent an emotional defect or mental disturbance that qualifies as a metis-deformity. On the other hand, the child's violent tantrums might signify something more sinister — the result of the influence of Anthelios at work within the child's spirit. If the Eye of the Wyrms does exercise its power within the child, you may allow characters to attempt to sever the connection between child and star — thus giving them a chance to effect a change in the "best-laid plans" of the Wyrms.

Although the characters involved in *Anthelios Raging* may never learn the true meaning of either the metis-born cub or the new star, you should have some idea of what both truly represent. You should also decide the particular circumstances of the child's birth with regard to the identity of the parents. Did their union come about accidentally, as a result of rape or in deliberate defiance of Gaia's law? The answer may prove thematically significant, so think carefully.

## Theme

*Anthelios Raging* deals with the shattering of complacency and the realization that the Garou are, in fact, living on the threshold of the Apocalypse. All the battles against minions of the Wyrms, all the politicking and bickering for tribal leadership, all the internecine wars for dominance of the Garou nation pale in comparison with the times that lie ahead. Every experience the Garou have had to this point stands as mere dress rehearsals for the "big one." According to some Garou prophets, the Eye of the Wyrms has opened in the sky. The Forbidden Child now walks the earth in Crinos form. The heavens resound with the battle cries of the Incarnae.

Although the primary events of *Anthelios Raging* revolve around the disposition of the metis-born child, another thread runs through this story, emphasizing the cosmic nature of the story itself. The star called Anthelios (or the Eye of the Wyrms) figures like a malevolent nativity star, hovering over the scenes — drawing friends and foes alike to the place where the child awaits. Although the characters

cannot directly encounter the Red Star, which remains ensconced in the Deep Umbra and waits in the wings for its time on stage, they do have the chance to discover more about Anthelios and determine for themselves whether the star bodes good or ill for the Garou.

Many mythologies center on the birth of a child who becomes a fugitive and is reared in secret. Some are saviors — Moses, Jesus, King Arthur — while others, like Oedipus and Arthur's own son Mordred, are destined to bring ruin to cities and kingdoms. The responsibilities attendant on raising a child who might be savior or destroyer also figure as a prominent theme in *Anthelios Raging*.

## Mood

*Anthelios Raging* evokes several moods. In the early parts of the story, the characters should experience the confusion and self-doubt that comes from suddenly finding themselves saddled with unexpected responsibilities. The many groups who develop a sudden (and often hostile) interest in the



characters should create an atmosphere of paranoia and frustration. As the story moves from the physical world into the Aetherial Realm, however, the mood should change to one of awe and humility as the characters confront the Incarnae in their homes and view wonders unlike anything they have seen before.

## *In the Beginning: Opening Scenes*

Getting a chronicle off to a start that engages and holds the interest of the players presents the greatest challenge for Storytellers. *Anthelios Raging* can begin in several ways, depending on the roles the characters play in the plot as well as on the type of story the Storyteller intends to create. The following scenes present different ways to start off a story involving the metis-born cub.

### *Intervention*

This scene starts the story in mid-action, as the pack of characters come upon a young woman in the midst of a losing battle to protect a small child — a Crinos cub. The characters have the opportunity to join in the fray, most likely in defense of the woman and child. The opponents can come from any number of groups interested in acquiring or slaying the metis-born cub, but the Storyteller should

gauge the relative strength of the characters so that they have a fair chance of defeating the opposition. Otherwise, the story's end could come about in the first scene.

To add to the scene's intensity, play up the conviction of the mother's attackers. They should appear completely convinced that they *must* succeed in capturing or killing the cub, if not now, then later. If the players are unnerved by the antagonists' strength of will, then they'll be drawn further into the story. By the end of the battle — and of the scene — the characters should have possession of the child, either by receiving a charge from the dying mother to care for the child or, if the mother survives, by agreeing to allow her to take refuge with them.

### *Dreams and Portents*

The Storyteller can foreshadow the events of *Anthelios Raging* by using dreams and portents to alert the characters to the existence of the metis-born cub and start them out on a search for the child. The examples of premonitory dreams given in "Star Light, Star Bright" at the beginning of this book illustrate ways in which characters can receive information through visions or dreams. In some cases, dreams or other portentous events can provide clear directions to the child. More often, however, characters need to interpret the symbols of their dreams in order to decipher the clues that will lead them to the child's location. Scenes involving dream sequences often form preludes to the actual story.



## Family Matters

If the characters elect to play the parents of the metis-born child (or one of the parents), you can begin the chronicle (or at least this current phase of it) with the birth of the child. Playing through this event can add intensity and immediacy to the story. Along with providing the characters with a strong motivation to protect the child in their midst, the birth can also allow Storytellers to bring in the first sighting of Anthelios in the heavens at the moment of the child's entry into the physical world. Other characters may be sept or packmates of the parents. They may support the metis parents or oppose them, but should be given a reason almost immediately to protect the child if not the parents.

## Lost and Foundling

The pack acquires the metis-born cub under seemingly accidental circumstances. They might come upon the cub's hiding place in the aftermath of a battle between the (now-deceased) parents and some unknown assailants, who were unable to locate the cub after killing its mother and father. Alternatively, the characters might find the child left on their doorstep — perhaps on the edges of the bawn of their

caern or in a dumpster outside the apartment of one of the pack members. In any case, however the child comes into the hands of the pack, the characters cannot tell for certain what significance the cub has — or even that it is significant. They can perceive that the child is Crinos, thus implying its metis nature. They can draw whatever conclusions they wish from the circumstances and from the realization that the baby seems to have no physical deformities.

## The Other Side of the Coin

Antagonist characters can hear of the birth of the metis-born cub either through dreams or visions or through reports from reliable sources. Their task, in this scene, consists of locating the whereabouts of the child. What they do when they find the child depends on what they believe the child represents. In all likelihood the characters belong to one of the major factions involved in the search for the child. Storytellers need to make certain that the characters either don't find the metis-born cub too quickly (if members of a faction that would kill the child) or else that they harbor enough uncertainty about how to deal with the child to keep them from destroying the cub immediately.

## Interested Parties

Although most Garou remain unaware of the existence of the metis-born cub, a few groups have knowledge of the child and desire to gain possession of it. *Anthelios Raging* introduces a few of these groups as either antagonists or potential allies for the player characters. The Storyteller should feel free to add scenes that include some of these groups or design her own.

- **Sept of the Prophecy:** The Garou of this sept rarely interact with other Garou, except in times of dire need or extraordinary circumstances. They collect and study the ancient prophecies of the Garou and possess a few fragments of prophetic verse unknown to most werewolves. They become aware of the metis-born cub almost as soon as it is born. Their goal is to find the child and make certain that it lives to maturity, for they believe that the metis-born signals the end of Gaia's curse and that the child will grow up to lead the forces of Gaia in the final battle against the Wyrms.

- **Protectors of Gaia:** These Garou also know of the birth of the metis-born cub. Their prophecies tell them, however, that the child represents a threat to Gaia. They have dedicated themselves to the destruction of the child in the firm conviction that its death serves to thwart the forces of the Wyrms. The Judges of Doom, a Shadow Lord camp of Philodox dedicated to punishing infractions of the Litany, have allied themselves with this group; they claim it's because of the affront to Gaia represented by the cub.

- **Hive of the Wyrms' Eye:** The Black Spiral Dancers who make up this fanatic group believe that the metis-born cub signals the impending Apocalypse. Proph-

ecies they have received from their totem spirit indicate that when the child undergoes the First Change (into human form) and achieves maturity, she (or he) will emerge as the leader of the armies of the Wyrms. Their goal consists of acquiring the guardianship of the child, thus ensuring that the metis-born cub joins the ranks of the Black Spirals.

- **Hive of the Broken Star:** Opposed to the Hive of the Wyrms' Eye, these Black Spiral Dancers fear that the metis-born cub represents the forces of Gaia. They seek to either kill the cub or kidnap it in the hope that they might keep it ignorant of its true purpose.

- **Section 12:** This cell of Pentex operatives consists of subverted Garou and Kinfolk-fomori under the leadership of a high-ranking Pentex research scientist. They have gathered enough information about the Garou to know that the child is an anomaly. Their desire is to acquire the metis-born cub for experimental purposes.

- **Harbingers of the Sun's Death:** Composed of several disparate groups, including members of the Society of Nidhogg, a Lasombra vampire and some members of the Unseelie fae, this group hopes to discover a way to "destroy" the sun — either through the perpetual darkness of nuclear winter or through some astronomical event that would have the same purpose. The Shadow Lords within the group have an interest in the metis-born cub since they believe that it will bring about the Apocalypse. They, therefore, wish to take the child for their own and raise it to serve their purpose.

## Friends and Enemies

In all likelihood, the characters acquire possession of the metis-born cub soon after the story begins. Once the child becomes a ward (or captive) of the characters, they find themselves beset on all sides by groups who wish either to take the child away from them or to kill it outright. No matter what they do, someone stands ready to shelter—or ambush—them. Not only does the existence of the metis-born cub polarize the Garou in general, the characters may find themselves engaged in internal conflict as to the fate of their charge. Storytellers should encourage as much ambiguity as possible, since the true nature of the child should remain a mystery for some time—perhaps even beyond the confines of the story.

The following scenes describe meetings between the characters and several groups who also desire to gain possession of the child. Whether or not the encounters result in combat is up to the Storyteller and players. Storytellers can decide whether or not to use some, all or none of these groups; the characters' natures and their motivations may allow Storytellers to choose the most appropriate and challenging encounters for the characters.

### ***Strong Arm of the Litany: The Protectors of Gaia***

Fanatically conservative in their interpretations of the Litany and of the will of Gaia, the Protectors of Gaia comprise some of the most formidable opponents to the metis-born cub—and to any Garou who seek to shelter the child. Led by Vasile Talon-of-Judgment, the renowned veteran of many battles against the enemies of Gaia (and the Shadow Lords), the Protectors seek nothing short of the ultimate destruction of the metis-born cub and its parents—provided they still live.

Storytellers who wish to begin their story in mid-action may have the characters come upon a one-sided battle between the Protectors and the cub's parents. In this case, the characters would have to pit themselves against other Garou in what appears to be a no-win situation. Even if they do defeat the Protectors, they place themselves in a precarious position with regard to Garou society. While many werewolves realize that the Protectors represent an extremist fringe, they also know that this group defends the Litany—thus, openly opposing them implies a lack of adherence to the fundamental principles of the Garou.

If the characters succeed in keeping the child out of the clutches of the Protectors, this group of fanatics continues to pursue the child. While they may not always engage in open combat, they do attempt to keep tabs on the characters (and their charge). They may institute a campaign of overt and covert harassment, using their influence among more conservative werewolves to make life difficult for the characters as long as they insist on protecting the child. Play up their conviction, but also make it clear that these are not fallen Garou. They may refer to the cub as “it,” refusing to acknowledge it as Garou, and they may seek to kill an as-yet innocent,

but they truly believe that if they fail, the cub is destined to take up the Wyrms' banner and lead its forces in the final battle. The Protectors, as their name implies, truly love Gaia—which should make them uncomfortable antagonists.

Eventually, the Protectors may attempt to bargain with the characters in an attempt to make them voluntarily surrender the child or may institute some sort of trial before a grand council of ranking werewolves in hopes of forcing them to give it up. The possibility that the Protectors might just be right in their assessment of the child should cause the characters many sleepless nights.

### ***Best Enemies: The Hive of the Wyrms' Eye***

Most Garou have a strong instinctive reaction to any encounters with Black Spiral Dancers. Encounters with these corrupted Garou rarely involve peaceful interaction. The Black Spirals who belong to the Hive of the Wyrms' Eye, however, do attempt to keep their initial meeting with the characters from degenerating into instant combat.

If the characters gain possession of the child through overcoming either the Protectors of Gaia or the Hive of the Broken Star (see below), members of the Hive of the Wyrms' Eye approach them with an offer of shelter and protection. Led by the charismatic Eeyarlagh Twice-Born, the Wyrms' Eye believes that the metis-born cub signals the approach of the Apocalypse and they hail it as a great leader-to-be.

By the time the characters meet Eeyarlagh and her pack, they may need all the help they can get—even when it comes at the hands of their supposed enemies. This scene could provide some real dilemmas for the characters, making them reassess everything they believe about the Garou, the Black Spirals and the Apocalypse.

While the Hive of the Wyrms' Eye wishes to gain control of the child for themselves, they care enough for the survival of their promised leader (the metis-born cub) that they are willing to compromise with the characters if necessary. If the characters insist on keeping the child, the members of the Wyrms' Eye insist on providing the child's caretakers with assistance in the form of bodyguards, financial support and other concrete assets. They offer the characters shelter in their Hive, promising that they will not try to convert anyone against her will—this might be a blatant lie, and it might actually be the twisted truth. Should the characters accept the offer of shelter, then they may find themselves engaged in a battle for their own sanity and souls as well as those of the child.

### ***Search and Destroy: Hive of the Broken Star***

Unlike the Hive of the Wyrms' Eye, the Black Spiral Dancers who call themselves the Hive of the Broken Star believe that the metis-born cub spells doom for those who serve the Wyrms. Their goal consists of locating and killing the child. Combat between this group and the characters



seems inevitable unless they can somehow convince the Dancers of the Broken Star that the child should live at least until its First Change. In all probability, however, the encounter between the characters and the Hive of the Broken Star will erupt in violent conflict.

If the Broken Star manages to get hold of the cub, the surviving characters may still have a chance at saving the child. S'rhaagh Iron Voice, the leader of the Hive of the Broken Star, hears "voices" that he claims emanate from Yakecen, the Fallen Singer. These voices command him to dedicate the child's spirit to the Wyrms. Thus, even though these Black Spirals desire the death of the child, they prefer to conduct a ritual sacrifice of the child within the Wyrmhole of their Pit (or in a comparable place in the Aetherial Realm if that is more feasible). This means that, if at all possible, the members of the Broken Star make the attempt to retrieve the child alive. It also buys time for the characters, giving them a deadline but allowing them the chance to find and rescue the child.

### *Strange Bedfellows: The Harbingers of the Sun's Death*

The Garou who belong to this sinister group have entered into a conspiracy with at least two other factions of the World of Darkness. Their goal is nothing less than the obliteration of the sun—or at least the perpetual concealment of its light. The

majority of the members of this group belong to the Society of Nidhogg, a controversial secret faction within the Shadow Lords. In addition to these dark-loving Garou, the Harbingers of the

Sun's Death include several Lasombra vampires (whose powers stem from their control of darkness) as well as some changelings who belong to the Unseelie Court, who aspire to bring about a time of darkness known as the Endless Winter.

The members of this group seek control of the metis-born cub since they consider the child's apparent link to the new star to be a sign of the impending Apocalypse. They further believe that Anthelios will eventually supplant the sun in the solar system and that the dim red light of the new star will provide the minimum necessary light for life within the world of their darkened, dystopic vision.

While the Harbingers may offer the characters a temporary respite from other factions who seek possession of the metis-born cub, they desire sole control of the child and will eventually seek to wrest the child from the characters. Leandra Silken Smiler, a seductive Shadow Lord who hides her ruthlessness beneath a veil of softness and civility, leads any negotiations between this group and the characters.

### *Benign Assistance: The Sept of the Prophecy*

The werewolves who belong to the Sept of the Prophecy can intervene at the Storyteller's discretion to provide direction or assistance as necessary for the characters. These reclusive and, for the most part, elder Garou come from several tribes. A mixture of Galliards and Theurges for the



most part, with an Ahroun or two to add some muscle if necessary, the members of the Sept of the Prophecy spend their time studying as many of the legends of the Garou as they can in order to determine the timing of the Apocalypse as closely as possible. Their studies have led them to the knowledge of both the metis-born cub and the birth of the new star. Guided by dreams sent to them by Sokhta, their patron, members of the Sept of the Prophecy locate the characters at some crucial moment and offer them a place to hide or show them where they need to go.

Their leader, an aging Galliard named Guliera Moonsister, has a wealth of information concerning childrearing which she willingly shares with the characters. (In addition to her motherly (or grandmotherly) advice, she also has a formidable body of information she can impart to the characters concerning the forces arrayed against them and the allies they might find. The Storyteller can use her (or create other members of the sept) as a means to guide the characters further into the story — and make certain that they eventually travel into the Aetherial Realm.

## *Upping the Ante: Complications*

Once the Storyteller has introduced the characters to the different groups who covet the metis-born or seek to destroy the child, the situation becomes even more complicated for the werewolves lucky (or unlucky) enough to become the guardians of the metis-born cub. Additional scenes involving pursuers, hardships and other obstacles should make life difficult for the characters. By increasing the pressure on the characters to keep the child safe while attempting to hold onto their reputations among the other Garou (who may disapprove of the metis-born cub on general principles), the Storyteller can eventually lead the characters in the direction she has planned for them. The following scenes offer some possibilities for making life “interesting” for the characters.

### *Big Bad Business: Section 12*

Storytellers who wish to expand the list of antagonists can bring in Section 12, a team of Pentex special operatives who specialize in research and experimentation on werewolves. Headed by Reginald Vaughn, a corrupted Silver Fang Kinfolk, the members of Section 12 have learned about the singular occurrence of fertility in a pair of metis werewolves. They wish to acquire the cub (and the parents, if they are still alive) in order to use them in fertility and breeding experiments — perhaps with the goal of cloning fertile metis werewolves.

Members of Section 12 may approach the characters with the offer of shelter. If the characters agree, Section members take them to a safehouse — actually their “secure” laboratory located in a semi-rural area. Once there, the characters find it difficult to leave, since the security guards

on the premises carry weapons designed for stopping werewolves (including silver bullets). It may even be that their “benefactors” offer medical assistance or other needed help at first. This would, of course, be an opportunity for Section 12 to examine (and possibly experiment on) the cub and/or the parents. The scientists might start carefully under the guise of caring, then gradually become more demanding and less careful as they become more certain they can contain the threat of the characters or rid themselves of the unwanted party members altogether. In order for the story to proceed, the characters should manage to escape with the cub, but the experience should alert them to the ever-growing circle of enemies gathering around them.

## *No Place Like Home*

If the characters attempt to take the cub to their caern, they discover that their septmates disagree on whether or not the characters can take sanctuary with them. While metis cubs spend their early years within the confines of a caern and its bawn, the characters’ septmates may object to this particular cub. Some feel that its existence offends Gaia, while others simply do not want the responsibility of caring for and raising a creature who might attract many enemies to the vicinity of the caern.

The Storyteller can explore the interrelationships among septmates in this scene, since the presence of the metis cub tends to polarize Garou who know about its origins. The characters may decide to conceal the parentage of the cub, but this only provides a temporary respite. Enemies continue to threaten the caern until the sept eventually discovers the truth and decides that the characters must leave for the greater good — and to avoid charges of violating the portion of the Litany that prevents violating the sanctity of the caern. If the characters lied or concealed the cub’s parentage, their septmates may feel betrayed and even brand them as outcasts.

If the characters attempt to take shelter with Kinfolk, they should experience a similar set of problems as their human relations come under fire from groups who want the metis-born cub.

## *Nowhere To Run*

Some Garou characters may attempt to hide the child in mortal society. If the pack includes Glass Walkers or Bone Gnawers, the idea of seeking the anonymity of life in the “big city” may offer some initial appeal. The folly of this approach should soon become apparent; humans cannot deal with a Crinos cub (however “cute” the child might be) in their midst. The characters either have to find a way to conceal the child from anyone they might meet or else use Gifts to disguise the child (a temporary measure at best). Even if the characters think of ploys such as joining a circus (and passing the child off as a circus freak), their enemies eventually catch up to them and make life miserable — if not deadly — for anyone associated with the child. Different

circumstances leading to a similar outcome apply to any attempt to rear the child in the vicinity of normal wolves.

### *Above and Beyond: Sirius Darkstar and the Sept of the Stars*

When the characters begin to despair of their task, they should encounter a mentor who can introduce them to a group of werewolves who can not only provide them with real assistance but whose caern lies in a place inaccessible to most of the enemies of the metis-born cub. Sirius Darkstar, a former Uktena Theurge, joined the Sept of the Stars when he discovered that his interests and theirs lay in the same direction.

Sirius Darkstar has observed the travails of the cub's parents and followed the fortunes of the characters as they struggle with their responsibilities as caregivers for the child. The characters' first meeting with him can either seem accidental or can take on the trappings of destiny, depending on the Storyteller's preferences. In any case, once he has established that he has the best interests of the metis-born child at heart, Sirius can offer guidance through his dreams. Despite his apparent forthrightness, the Theurge has an ulterior motive. He hopes to convince the characters that their best course of action lies in traveling to the Aetherial Realm and seeking assistance from the Sept of the Stars.

These Aetherial-based Garou have their own plans for protecting the metis-born as well as for studying the child in order to learn its true purpose in the destiny of the world. While the individuals of the sept have differing opinions about the metis-born, Sirius personally believes that the child is not predestined to be either the deliverer or the destroyer of the Garou. He feels that the child serves as a catalyst for either eventuality and that those who raise the child can determine her destiny. He hopes, naturally, that the duty will fall to the Sept of the Stars, but the characters can serve as a good substitute if they insist on retaining guardianship of the child.

Remember that, like the other members of the Sept of the Stars, Sirius' lengthy exposure to the Umbra has transformed him into a spirit-creature. In order to interact with the characters in the "flesh," he must create a physical form for himself — materializing in the same fashion as spirits do. This physical body gradually breaks down if he remains in the material world for too long.

### *Beyond the Gauntlet*

Eventually, the characters should realize that their best chance for dealing with the child lies in the Umbra — specifically in the Aetherial Realm. The problems of bringing up a child whose birth form is her Crinos-shape seem less bothersome on the other side of the Gauntlet. Furthermore, strong hints — through omens, prophecies and ten-foot-tall road signs (if necessary) — lead the characters to seek advice and counsel from some of the greatest spirits in the Umbra — the Incarnae themselves. This turn of events allows the

group to participate in storytelling on a grand scale — as grand as it gets.

### *Star-bound*

This scene can occur whenever the player characters decide to take the metis-born cub to the Aetherial Realm. If they follow the direction of Sirius Darkstar, they find themselves guests at the spirit orrery of the Sept of the Stars. The Stargazers who make this realm their home already know about the metis-born cub and seem to expect the characters. Although they possess information that can help the characters, including knowledge of the appearance of Anthelios, there is much they do not know. What the Sept of the Stars can offer the Garou, however, is a temporary refuge and an introduction to the realms of the planetary spirits. These Incarnae hold the key to resolving the dilemma of the metis-born cub — or at least they can offer some help in determining the child's fate and purpose. In addition, if the characters have not heard the prophecies detailed in Chapter Three, this scene provides an ideal opportunity for them to do so.

Storytellers should use the information on the Sept of the Stars found in *Umbra: the Velvet Shadow* to supplement the material presented in Chapter One and the Appendix of this book to flesh out the meeting between the pack and the members of the sept of the Stars. Remember that their extended time in the Umbra have transformed most of the members of this sept into creatures who are more spirit than flesh. This should not be readily apparent to the characters, however, unless something happens to emphasize this fact. Gifts that allow Garou to sense the presence of spirits may "detect" members of the Sept of the Stars.

### *To Travel the Stars*

The characters may decide to seek the Aetherial Realm on their own, without assistance from the Sept of the Stars. The Storyteller should prepare to describe the journey to the home of the Incarnae's realms. If the characters enter the Aetherial Realm without stopping by the spirit orrery and introducing themselves to the members of the Sept of the Stars, they may find their dealings with the planetary Incarnae problematic. Nevertheless, the characters should have the chance to use all their knowledge of spirit propitiation to facilitate their relations with the very powerful spirits that make their home in the Aetherial Realm.

In all likelihood, characters visiting the Aetherial Realm may interact first with Jagglings who serve one of the Incarnae who inhabit the inner planets of the solar system. Sooner or later, they should attain an audience with an Incarna — likely either Sokhta or Katanka-Sonnak. Regardless of whom they meet, however, the Incarna should insist that the Garou pay proper deference. (See *Axis Mundi: the Book of Spirits* for some hints on how to approach a spirit in the proper fashion).



Presumably the characters arrive in the Aetherial Realm with the metis-born cub in tow. Any spirit who encounters the child can sense that the metis-born cub represents something new, though they may not tell whether or not the child portends good or ill for the Garou. Some of the Incarnae, however, may have definite opinions — once they connect the child with the appearance of Anthelios — about what the child's fate should be. The characters may have to defend the child's right to exist, if they wish to protect the metis-born cub. Alternately, the characters may need to justify why the child must die to some of the Incarnae who might believe that the child represents the only thing that can save them from Anthelios.

## *Among the Incarnae*

Whether the Sept of the Stars sends the characters on a quest to consult the planetary Incarnae or the characters decide on their own to consult the Incarnae as to the fate of the child and the meaning of Anthelios' appearance, the Storyteller should prepare to lead the characters on a grand journey among the realms of the planets. The following scenes provide ideas for encounters between the characters and the various Incarnae of the planets.

If the characters have learned (or already know) the basics of werewolf astrology, they may first want to approach their astrological patrons — either out of curiosity or in the hope that these Incarnae may prove more sympathetic or helpful. If Sirius Darkstar (or one of the other members of the Sept of the Stars) offers to accompany the characters as a guide and intermediary, he may suggest that the characters begin with the Incarnae who rule over the inner planets of the solar system. Because of their relative closeness to the Earth, Katanka-Sonnak, Sokhta, Nerigal, Tambiyah and Mitanu may seem more approachable to the characters and may ease them into the task of garnering support for (or against) the metis-born cub or information about the nature of Anthelios. For that matter, the characters may decide to start with a visit to Eshtarra, because of her association with Gaia.

Storytellers need not use all of these scenes (indeed, players may tire quickly of going from one meeting with an Incarna to another, similar, meeting). If the players enjoy taking a "guided tour" of the Aetherial Realm, however, feel free to use all of the following scenes. Needless to say, Storytellers should decide in what order to place these scenes based on the demands of their story and on the actions of the characters.

Storytellers should consult the information in Chapter One on the planetary realms and their rulers to detail the manner in which the characters must approach and gain access to the Incarnae. The Penumbra of each planet has its own peculiarities, which reflect the personality of its ruling Incarna. You might want to subtly guide the players toward audiences with Incarnae whose views support your decision of the cub's role — or, more effectively, show the players

both sides of the story, but offer subtle hints as to which Incarna has the closest insight into the matter.

One final wrinkle could come in the form of presents, whether fetishes or actual Gifts, bestowed by the Incarnae. Obviously, each Incarna should only give a gift to a werewolf who impresses him by exhibiting many of the Incarna's "virtues," and who clearly intends to act as the Incarna advises. Certainly, such a scene can pick out a character as something of a "chosen one" himself; this would be an ideal time to put the spotlight on any characters who have been languishing from a lack of attention.

## *Nerigal, the Ice Warrior*

After the pack has succeeded in gaining an audience with the Ice Warrior, they may present their case to him — keeping in mind the proper means of dealing with this warlike Incarna. If they have come to seek Nerigal's advice on how to deal with the metis-born cub or ask for information about the cub or Anthelios, the characters can expect to undergo some sort of trial or undertake a quest in order to receive the information.

Nerigal bases his judgment of the metis-born cub on the child's apparent suitability, or lack thereof, as a warrior. Since the cub bears no obvious physical deformities and demonstrates a decidedly aggressive attitude (remember the cub's Crinos birth-form and its high Rage), the Ice Warrior may tend to favor the child. If, however, Nerigal determines that the metis-born cub may grow up to use its powers in the service of Anthelios or the Wyrms, he may recommend destroying the child before it reaches maturity. Characters who feel bound to protect the child may find themselves in the awkward position of trying to defend their young charge from the Ice Warrior's Jagglings armies. If, however, the characters demonstrate their willingness to face down a host of War-spirits, the Ice Warrior may reward them for their courage by sparing the child — for the present. The characters may argue that they can attempt to influence the metis-born and perhaps alter the child's fate.

Nerigal feels the disturbance caused by the presence of Anthelios. He senses that it represents an intrusion into the Aetherial Realm but does not know its origin. He connects the coming of Anthelios with the Apocalypse and welcomes the prospect of the coming battle with whatever spirit emerges as the Incarna of the Eye of the Wyrms. Characters seeking a means of averting the Apocalypse may not find Nerigal in their camp.

## *Eshtarra, the Songteller*

Because of her resemblance to Gaia, of which she is an aspect, Garou may feel more comfortable at first with the thought of dealing with Eshtarra. Their initial encounters with the spirits that serve the Songteller, however, should emphasize the vast difference between this Incarna of Gaia and the Celestine Herself. As the Songteller, Eshtarra's

concerns reflect the procession of Earth's history from its first cohesive moments in the universe to its eventual end.

Once the characters have proven their worthiness to meet with Eshtarra, they may seek the Songteller's guidance about the metis-born cub and the new star. In order to gain information from this Incarna, however, they must first present her with their own histories or with some piece of knowledge, lore or insight.

Eshtarra's nurturing tendencies may come to the fore in any discussions involving the metis-born cub. The Incarna recognizes the child as a young creature in need of protectors and intermediaries. She approves of the characters' concern with preventing the untimely death of the young Crinos and agrees with them that the child's destiny remains malleable, even if it bears the influence of Anthelios.

The Red Star, however, concerns her deeply, since its dim light cannot support the rich variety of life that the earth knows under the benign influence of Helios. If Anthelios wins through into the physical world and displaces the sun or crashes into the earth, Eshtarra's realm will undergo irrevocable damage. Although she does not know anything definite about the nature or purpose of Anthelios, she does have access to prophecies and songs that make reference to the "coming of the Sun's Destroyer." (See *Eshtarra's Song* in Chapter Three for an example of the Songteller's information.)

## Mitanu, the Clever Rogue

When the characters finally manage to locate the elusive Mitanu in his ever-shifting realm, they can wrest surprisingly insightful lore from him. Their experiences en route to a meeting with the wily Incarna should alert the characters to their need not only to capture but to hold Mitanu's attention.

If he finds them intriguing and entertaining enough, Mitanu offers his thoughts on both the metis-born cub and the new star. He may, however, present his information and speculations indirectly — either by answering questions with questions or by asking the characters to solve riddles or puzzles which contain the answers. Characters should never be entirely certain that Mitanu is telling them the truth. In some cases, they may not even realize the actual meaning of the Incarna's words until later.

Mitanu sees the metis-born cub as proof of Gaia's sense of humor. He suggests that perhaps the Garou have grown too complacent in their notions of pure breeding and that the cub exists to take them down a peg or two. He does not know if the cub and the appearance of Anthelios have anything in common. He may observe that the dilemma over what to do with the metis-born cub might simply serve as a distraction for the Wyrms, drawing the attention of the Garou toward the cub's fate rather than the approach of Anthelios. (*"It's what I would do..."*)



He expresses more interest in the new star than in the metis-born cub. His speculations on the nature of Anthelios range from the likely (*"Its presence threatens the balance of power among the Incarnae in the Aetherial Realm"*) to the wildly improbable (*"Perhaps it has mistaken us for some other universe..."*). He does not admit at any time to not knowing Anthelios' nature or purpose, preferring to evade the issue and goad the characters into voicing their own speculations.

What the characters can gain from their meeting with Mitanu is the knowledge that even the most roguish of the Incarnae finds the presence of Anthelios unsettling. This, in and of itself, should worry the Garou.

### ***Sokhta, the Lambent Lady***

Garou who penetrate the mysteries surrounding the Lambent Lady's realm can petition this Incarna for assistance in answering their questions regarding Anthelios and the metis-born cub. Sokhta represents the aspect of Luna that deals with the unknowable and the unknown, so Garou may gain valuable insights from their meeting with her. In essence, Sokhta can lead the characters in the direction of knowledge, though she may leave them with a few mysteries to solve on their own.

Sokhta listens carefully to the characters' arguments and queries, remaining silent and reflective until they have

completely finished with what they have to say. She may continue to regard them without speaking for some time afterwards, testing their patience. Garou who find the waiting period difficult and who attempt to urge her to answer before she is ready risk rousing her displeasure and coming away empty handed from their meeting. Those who wait receive the benefits of their patience.

Sokhta sees the metis-born cub as a reflection of Gaia's response to the desperation of the Garou. She reminds the characters that, just as their Crinos form contains aspects of both wolf and human, spirit and flesh, the metis-born child may represent a resolution to the conflict between Gaia and the Wym. As something never before seen upon the earth, this child born from two supposedly sterile parents contains strong Wyld tendencies. The child is a new creation and represents undiscovered potential. This, Sokhta tells the characters, can have both good and bad consequences for the Garou. She supports the attempt to nurture the child and ensure that it grows up to serve Gaia, although she warns the characters that they need to keep alert to signs of the Wym's influence upon the metis-born cub. She sees the child's future as a mystery that will reveal itself at the proper time. To slay it now might prevent it from becoming a threat to Gaia but it would also result in depriving the Garou of a possible asset in the final battle.





The Lambent Lady has a less ambiguous opinion of Anthelios. She has spent a good deal of energy coming to terms with Katanka-Sonnak; she does not need to start over again with a new "anti-sun."

She believes that Anthelios does, in fact, herald the Apocalypse and that its assumption of material form can only portend a time of great tribulation for the universe in general and the Earth in particular. She agrees with the speculation that the new star may take the form of a gigantic asteroid headed for Eshtarra's domain.

### ***Katanka-Sonnak, the Wind Rider***

When the characters arrive in Katanka-Sonnak's realm, they may present this Incarna with their queries regarding Anthelios and the metis-born cub. They should prepare their presentation carefully, however, for Katanka-Sonnak appreciates both style and substance. He does not appreciate subtlety, but prefers grand drama and bold deeds.

Katanka-Sonnak responds positively to the fierce energy represented by the young Crinos cub, seeing in the child's barely contained fury the same ever-blazing energies that power the sun's heat. Characters who notice this may emphasize the youth and potential of the cub to further gain Katanka-Sonnak's favor for the child. If, however, the characters mention the appearance of Anthelios in conjunction with the cub's birth, Katanka-Sonnak visibly withdraws his approval.

He openly and violently loathes Anthelios, considering the new star a rival. He believes that the Eye of the Wyrms has come to issue a challenge to Katanka-Sonnak's place in the center of the solar system. He concurs with the idea that Anthelios' arrival heralds the Apocalypse.

Unless the characters can offer convincing arguments for sparing the child, the Wind Rider advocates the metis-born cub's destruction. Characters interested in saving the child from certain death at the hands of this Incarna might do well to argue that the cub's connection with Anthelios might be an adversarial one rather than a supportive one. If they explain that the child's existence might act as a counterbalance to the presence of Anthelios, Katanka-Sonnak relents and concedes that the characters might be right.

Nevertheless, if he has any reason to believe that the child may come under the influence of the Eye of the Wyrms, Katanka-Sonnak may call a tribunal of Incarnae in order to decide the issue once and for all.

### ***Hakahe, the Ebon Whisperer***

If the characters gain permission to meet with Hakahe, they should tread cautiously around the Ebon Whisperer. This moody and somewhat sinister Incarna may regard them with suspicion until they convince him that they have great need of his advice. Even then, Hakahe warns them that his words may not give them comfort or guidance; rather, he may lead them down the dark pathways of their hearts.

Hakahe views the metis-born cub as a true sign of the Apocalypse, but his attitude toward this realization may surprise some of the characters. The Ebon Whisperer believes in the necessity of the Apocalypse. Destruction precedes creation, and should not be a cause for fear. He recognizes the Crinos child as the fulfillment of many prophecies and, therefore, inevitable and desirable. Although he encourages the characters to protect the child, he warns them that they may find their doom waiting for them if they link their future with that of the metis-born cub.

In a similar fashion, the Ebon Whisperer seems to welcome the arrival of Anthelios. He has expected the coming of the Wyrms' harbinger and does not fear the havoc its presence in the Aetherial Realm may cause. Characters may note that Hakahe grows almost cheerful at the thought of a likely battle among the planetary Incarnae. The Ebon Whisperer informs the characters that he has prepared for this time for eons and has warned the other Incarnae that they, too, should make ready for the end of all things. It is not his fault that his brother and sister spirits do not concern themselves with knowledge that makes them uncomfortable. He is ready to do his part; if the other Incarnae fall by the wayside because they did not prepare, that is not his problem.

### ***Tambiyah, the Veiled Mother***

When the characters meet Tambiyah, they may bask momentarily in the plenitude that surrounds them. They should know not to mistake the warmth of the Veiled Mother for weakness or softness. Tambiyah's ferociously protective nature makes her a formidable opponent as well as a staunch ally.

Tambiyah's commitment to the preservation of the young works in favor of the metis-born cub. The Veiled Mother encourages the characters not only to raise the child, but to listen to what the child might have to teach them. Even if the child bears the mark of Anthelios or the taint of the Wyrms, the characters should accept the challenge of rearing the cub. She suggests they consider the responsibility as a test of their ability to strike a balance between the destructive force inherent in the young Crinos and the creative energies symbolized by its Wyld nature.

The Lambent Lady can supply the characters with some information about the original place of the Wyrms in the Triat and may emphasize that the Wyrms' madness, not its destructive nature, forms the source of its corruption. She advises the characters to watch the metis-born cub carefully for signs of mental disturbance so that they can take measures to treat any latent madness before it surfaces.

Tambiyah's feelings about Anthelios, however, bring her defensive capacity to the surface. She urges the characters to discover everything they can about the new star so that the Garou in the physical world and the planetary Incarnae in the Aetherial Realm can better prepare themselves for a confrontation. She acknowledges the connec-

tion between destruction and creation, but emphasizes the importance of striking a balance.

### ***Meros, the Wandering Mystic***

It may take some time for the pack to catch up to Meros in his Aetherial wanderings, but their visit with him may provide them with food for thought. Once they have gained his attention, the characters may ask him for his insights about Anthelios and the metis-born cub.

In some ways, Meros' opinions echo those of Hakahe; both Incarnae concern themselves with deep and often hidden subjects, Meros, however, projects a calm fatalism. Not only does he see the workings of destiny in the simultaneous occurrence of the birth of the child and the appearance of Anthelios, but he also acknowledges the "rightness" of the twin events.

Meros believes that the child's destiny links it to the new star. He can quote the prophecies of the Garou as well as a few bits of information known only to him. (See Chapter Three for the *Wanderings of Meros*.) If the characters ask him about the meaning of this vision, he tells them that he has not yet penetrated the veil of words to find the truths concealed within. He invites the characters to make their own attempts to decipher the prophecy.

Meros sees Anthelios as the embodiment of the Apocalypse in the Aetherial Realm, but he does not regret its coming. He tells the characters that death represents a doorway to a greater transformation. According to his beliefs, the Apocalypse enables a new beginning. He embraces the inevitability of the Last Days, and encourages the characters to do the same. *"This is why the Garou were created — to give the world new life through their sacrifice."*

Characters may hear Meros' words as a prediction of death for themselves and, possibly, for all the Garou but this is not the case. The Wandering Mystic refers to the purging of the soul and the testing of the will that comes in the heat of battle or as a result of great tribulations. His prediction carries with it a seed of hope rather than despair.

### ***Zarok, the Crowned Ruler***

When the characters enter the presence of Zarok, they sense the Incarna's regal power almost immediately. The Crowned Ruler enjoys his role as undisputed regnant of the outer planets of the Aetherial Realm. After making appropriate gestures in recognition of Zarok's authority, the characters can request his thoughts on their young charge and on the new star.

Jupiter's Incarna expresses his opinions in a typically magnanimous fashion, mindful of the import of his words. He proclaims the metis-born child a "creature touched by the hand of prophecy and marked by fate to usher in a time of momentous occurrences." The child exists; therefore it deserves a chance to fulfill its potential. He warns the characters that they must do everything within their power — even to the point of sacrificing their lives — to ensure

that the child matures. Otherwise, the grand design of the universe, "that which is written in the fabric of the stars" may never come to pass.

Zarok does not display such tolerance or acceptance of Anthelios. He considers the new star an intruder in a universe that does not welcome its arrival. Zarok demands that the characters attempt to rouse the other Incarnae to take arms and prepare to do battle to keep the Eye of the Wyrms from carving out a place in the Aetherial Realm.

Zarok seems to relish the idea of a great battle. He sees the Apocalypse as a time of heroic deeds and as an opportunity for the ultimate victory over the forces of destruction and corruption. Regardless of whether or not the characters agree with everything this Incarna has to say, they can draw inspiration from his confidence.

### ***Lu-Bat, the Peaceful Counselor***

An atmosphere of serenity and calm surround the characters as they come before Lu-Bat, the Incarna who rules the Aetherial realm that corresponds to Saturn. Though not nearly as formal as Zarok, Lu-Bat displays a poise that belies his sharp-tongued wit and dispassionate humor. He listens sagely to the characters' questions about the metis-born cub and the new star, taking in every nuance of their speech and body language.

The Peaceful Counselor does just what his epithet implies; he counsels the characters with regard to the dangers they face in raising a child whose existence poses a potential threat to the Garou and to the delicate balance of Wyld, Weaver and Wyrms. He points out that the balance already teeters toward the side of the Wyrms. He reminds the characters that, although they know the corruption that threatens their own world, the malaise of Wyrms-taint also spreads throughout the universe in the form of cast-off space junk that litters the skies. He speaks mildly, though his words contain harsh truths and bleak observations. He does, however, believe that the metis-child represents an unknown factor and that the characters should follow their instincts in allowing the child to mature.

He has observed the progress of Anthelios with great concern, sensing the wrongness that emanates from its dim radiance. He advises the characters to learn as much as they can about the new star but not to attempt to approach it prematurely. Lu-Bat, like the other Incarnae, recognizes the Garou tendency to act first and ponder the consequences later. He does not want them to precipitate a confrontation with Anthelios before knowing its nature and purpose.

He broaches the possibility that the metis-born cub might have the power to communicate with Anthelios — if not now, then later, when the new star becomes more prominent and the child attains maturity. He advises them to watch the child carefully. Even if the child does fall prey to the influence of Anthelios, the characters may find it useful to have a "spy" in their camp. Lu-Bat hopes that some sort of peaceful solution will present itself before Anthelios

manifests completely in the physical world. He tries to instill this hope in the characters.

### ***Ruatma, the Shadowed One***

Once the characters have achieved admission to the shadowy realm of Ruatma, they can sense that they stand in the presence of the Incarna of subtlety and discretion. The characters may ask the Shadowed One his opinions regarding the metis-born cub and the new star, but they should not expect a direct response from this master of intrigue.

Ruatma enjoys educating the minds of those who seek him out, leading them down convoluted pathways of thought until they arrive at a multiplicity of conclusions. This attitude comes through in his responses to the characters' queries.

The existence of the metis-born cub delights Ruatma, bringing to his labyrinthine mind numerous possibilities. He sees nothing amiss in exploiting the child's connection to Anthelios. If the cub does have a link with the new star, then observing the child's development might alert the characters and, through them, the Garou as a whole, to the plans of the Wyrn. He also notes that the child can serve to test the Garou tribes; those who blindly condemn the child as a sign of the Wyrn or a violation of the Litany may prove too intransigent and brittle to survive the Apocalypse. Those who, on the other hand, can entertain the notion that Gaia Herself might have lifted the curse of sterility from her metis children may demonstrate the necessary adaptability to overcome the wiles of the Wyrn's armies.

Lu-Bat has similarly complex thoughts on the appearance of Anthelios. He does not speculate so much on the nature of the star but on the consequences its appearance causes to the Umbra. He believes that since it seems to creep closer rather than streaking swiftly into full existence that the star might, in fact, represent an attempt to draw the Wyrn's opponents away from its actual place of combat. He suggests that the characters learn to look beneath the surface and to attempt to see through the eyes of their enemy. Only in this fashion can they anticipate the movements and plans of the Wyrn.

All this advice should thoroughly confuse the characters, muddling their thoughts so that they can not come to any clear determination so long as they remain in Lu-Bat's realm. This is, of course, the Shadowed One's intention. He does not want anyone to come away from his realm with fixed ideas. He hopes that those who speak with him learn to throw away all their previously conceived notions.

### ***Shantar, the Loom Maker***

If the characters can thread their way through the approach to Shantar's realm, they may ask the Loom Maker for her ideas on the metis-born cub and the new star. As one of the Incarnae of the outer planets, Shantar may seem removed from the concerns of the Garou. This is far from the

truth, however, since her realm stands to feel the passage of Anthelios earlier than the realms of the other planetary Incarnae.

Shantar finds the metis-born cub fascinating and somewhat charming. ("This is the first new thing Gaia has come up with in eons!") She believes that the child's existence proves that the world has not grown stagnant with repetition. She suggests that the cub might simply be the first in a succession of cubs born from the union of two metis. She asks the characters if the child belongs to any tribe or if it represents the beginning of an entirely new tribe of Garou. She hopes that the child becomes a force for change and innovation among the Garou and tells the characters that it is their responsibility to see that it does just that.

The Loom Maker voices her strong concern about the coming of Anthelios to the Aetherial Realm. She claims that sometimes she can hear a faint droning sound — like that of a discordant choir — coming from the star's vicinity. The music disturbs her and seems to vibrate through the spaces between realms with a destructive energy that has no basis in renewal. She believes that Anthelios represents sheer and total annihilation with no chance at starting over. The characters should sense an undercurrent of something akin to fear (if Incarnae can experience that emotion) as Shantar speaks of Anthelios. Discerning characters may realize that the Loom Maker knows that either she or Meros will first encounter Anthelios. The prospect does not give her reason for comfort. She cannot estimate the time that remains until the new star forces its way into the physical world, but she believes that it will do so very soon. (Of course, the concept of "soon" might have a different meaning for an Incarna.)

### ***Rorg, the Many-Taloned Hunter***

If the characters brave the perils of the Umbral asteroid belt to visit Rorg, the Many-Taloned Hunter — impressed by their success in passing through his realm — consents to meet with them. The characters may feel the bitterness that surrounds this Incarna. His "world" exists only in fragments and he has never forgiven the other Incarna for allowing this event to come to pass.

Rorg responds to the inner fury of the Crinos cub. He believes that if the child can survive, it deserves to do so. He warns the characters not to coddle the child or protect it more than is necessary. Its ability to adapt and persist on its own should dictate whether or not it deserves to live.

He suspects that Anthelios has come to the Aetherial Realm for the express purpose of destroying the worlds — not just the realm of Eshtarra but all the other planets as well. Rorg snarls as he speaks of the new star; although he wishes to prevent its destructive aims, he also gloats over the fact that Anthelios can do little to harm him or his realm. He has already experienced the destruction of the planet he once ruled. He figures that he has nothing left to lose.





## *The Return*

When the characters have come to the end of their travels through the Aetherial Realm they may have more information than they can assimilate about the metis-born cub, Anthelios and the Incarnae. Now they need to decide what to do with their knowledge.

If, based on their experiences with the planetary Incarnae, the characters remain determined to protect the metis-born cub, they might decide to take their arguments in favor of this course of action to the leadership of the Garou.

They can do this in one of two ways — either by canvassing the various tribes through meetings with noted tribal elders or by convincing five elders of different tribes to call a concolation of all Garou. If the characters can demonstrate to the Garou as a whole that the cub may represent their salvation and that its very existence indicates a change in Gaia's attitude toward metis Garou, they may gain permission to keep the child within the safety of a caern. In fact, several caerns may volunteer to act as foster homes for the cub in hopes of gaining Renown for raising it. Of course, if the characters fail to convince the Garou attending the concolation that the child should live, they face either the prospect of killing the child or else escaping with it and risking ostracism for their defiance.

The characters may also share their knowledge of Anthelios with as many Garou as possible, either through the system of tribal moots or else by arranging for a Grand Moot or concolation. The debate about what the new star represents and whether or not it is the sign that the Wyrms has shaken its bonds may distract the Garou from the metis-born cub and focus their attention on preparations for the final battle.

## *Ending the Story*

By the end of the story, the characters should either have an idea about how they should deal with the child or should have come to some resolution regarding the child's fate. The final decision, however, should belong to the characters — and to them alone.

They may decide to leave the child in the care of the Sept of the Stars. These Garou are willing to raise the child so long as they have a reason to believe that the metis-born cub is not inherently evil.

The characters may decide to raise the child themselves. If so, they need to find a relatively permanent and secluded place — such as an Umbral Glade or a secure wilderness hiding place — in which to rear a child whose Crinos form prevents her from associating with either normal humans or normal wolves. If the characters can find a

protector among the planetary Incarnae, they may ask for and receive permission to carve out their own mini-realm within the greater domain of their benefactor. This option allows the players to retire the pack if they like, taking up new characters to start a new chronicle — one which may culminate with the cub reappearing, fully grown, eight or ten years down the road (or even sooner, given the vagaries of Umbral time), ready to fulfill its destiny.

If the pack determines that the child represents a serious threat to the Garou or decides that slaying the child may prevent the emergence of Anthelios into the material world, then so be it. Storytellers should make it difficult for the characters to take an easy way out by handing the child over to one of the groups sworn to destroy the child. If they do, for example, seek to deliver the child to the Protectors

of Gaia or the Hive of the Broken Star, they should have to participate in the death of the child. Distance does not imply innocence or lack of culpability.

It is possible that the characters may feel that the child is an agent of the Wyrms but decide to let it live anyway, figuring that at least they know what it is and can combat a known enemy. Some Garou fatalists may believe that the child's existence and the coming of the new star represent an inevitable future.

Whatever the ending, this is a major turning point for all Garou. Your players should feel as though they've represented their people in a great test, possibly the greatest.

Don't spoil it by telling them whether they guessed right or not, though.

### *The Care and Feeding of a Metis Cub*

Since the party may end up as either temporary or permanent guardians of the metis-born cub, they should realize that caring for a child in permanent Crinos form presents many difficulties. First of all, the Crinos birth form of a metis means that the child must avoid exposure to human or wolf society until her First Change. This means that the party must find a safe and secluded place to raise the cub or else keep it hidden (or disguised) when they venture away from "home" with her.

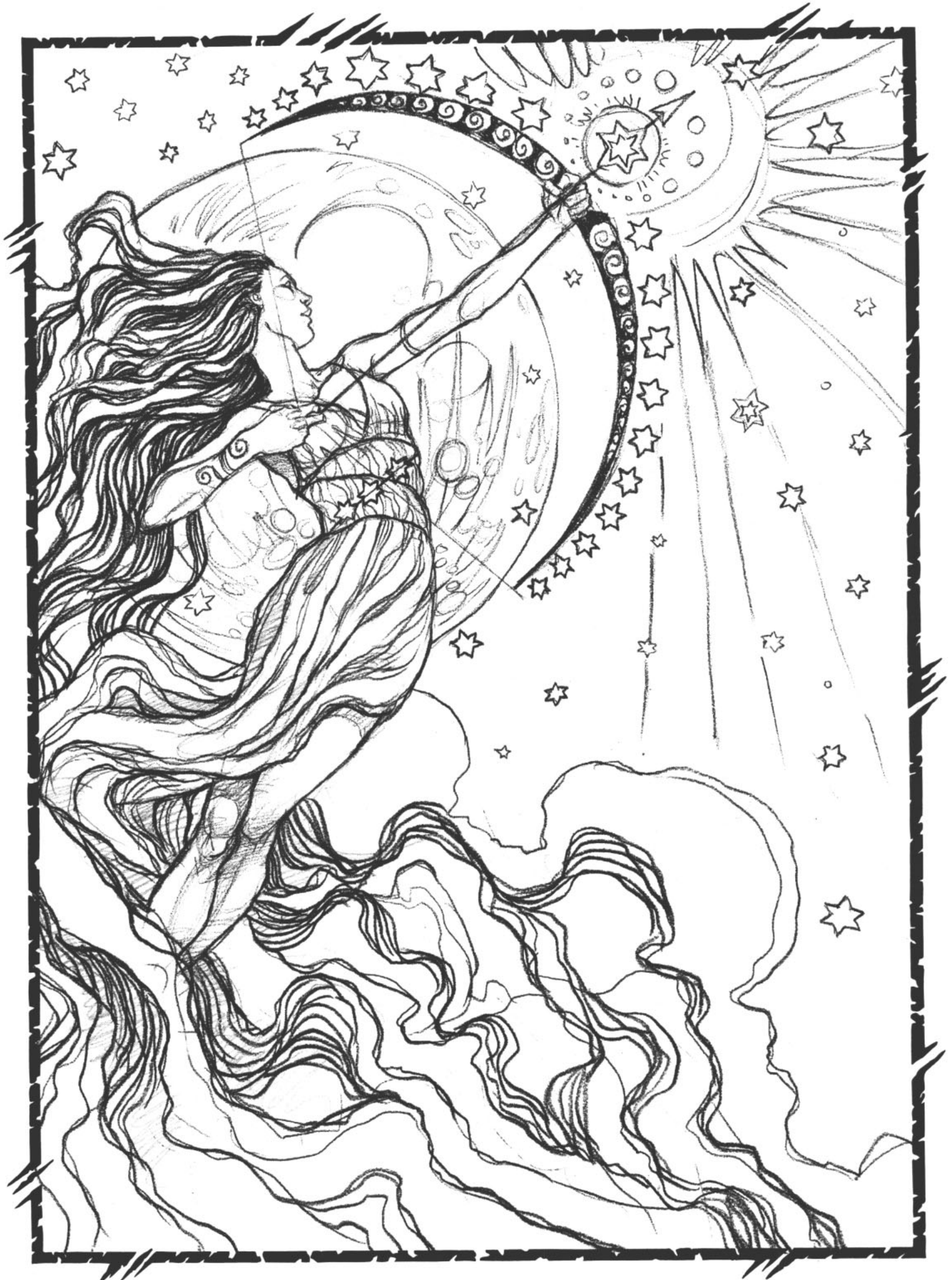
Most metis Garou spend their early years within the confines of the caern of one or both of their Garou parents. This metis cub, however, has no such sanctuary and few septs will accept the child. Some other supernaturals, such as mages or changelings, might agree to keep watch over the cub, and characters may come up with the idea of placing the child within a chantry or freehold. They should be aware, however, that mages or the fae might want the child for their own purposes.

Metis cubs mature faster than human children, though they still age at a slower rate than wolf cubs. Most metis undergo their First Change at around eight years of age. Their emotional maturity comes quickly, too — as it

must, to make the cubs strong enough to face life as metis. Characters cannot continue to treat a metis cub as a "child" for more than three or four years. After that, the cub resembles a human teenager in interests and emotional stability.

Because of their permanent Crinos form, metis cubs remain in a state of near-Rage. Since both the parents of a metis are Garou, the cub has no human or wolf blood to temper their inner anger. They tend toward violent emotions and can frenzy at the slightest hurt or insult. Characters must prepare themselves to deal with a child whose tantrums can have devastating consequences. Metis cubs do respond to strong authority figures and can be kept in line by characters with a high Intimidation or Manipulation. The characters need to protect the child from herself as well as from human society and from most Garou.

Finally, although it would seem logical that the child of two metis Garou would have a double dose of metis deformities, the metis-born cub has no apparent flaws. The idea may occur to some characters that the child's deformity consists of a mental or emotional disturbance. Whether or not this is true is for the Storyteller to decide.





# Chapter Five: Heavenly Laws

*Bring me my bow of burning gold,  
Bring me my arrows of desire,  
Bring me my spear — O clouds, unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire!*  
— William Blake

The Aetherial Realm corresponds to the vastness of outer space in the physical world. Garou who travel in this part of the Umbra may encounter spirits unlike those that inhabit the Penumbra. The Incarnae whose domains lie within the Aetherial Realm rest uneasy in their knowledge that the time of the Apocalypse grows closer. The appearance of the Red Star has galvanized most of them into action and many of these powerful spirits have become willing to share their knowledge of Gifts with Garou who seek them out. In addition, worthy Garou may receive fetishes or talens from the Incarnae or their servant Jagglings.

This chapter contains a number of Gifts, rites, fetishes and talens for use in chronicles involving the Aetherial Realm and the war taking place in the heavens. These are almost without exception available only after extensive Aetherial questing; they aren't found in a sept's storehouse of resources. In addition, new Merits and Flaws enable Storytellers and players to expand and customize their Garou characters. And, of course, there's a new Ability, Garou Astrology, which can grant characters the ability to make head and tail out of all this celestial lore.

## New Knowledge: Garou Astrology

You have a familiarity with the Garou lunar zodiac and its patron Incarnae. You have visited the Aetherial Realm at least once and you have some idea of how to plan your actions to conform with the most auspicious times of the year or month.

- Novice: You've studied with your pack's Theurge and know which Incarnae rule which months.
- Practiced: You know which Incarnae govern which activities and the best time to invoke their assistance.
- Competent: You can trace back the birth stars of other Garou and smell out powerful influences on their lives.
- Expert: You have a keen knowledge of the fine details of Garou astrology and would make a top-notch instructor in the lore.
- Master: You will eventually be drawn to the Sept of the Stars.

**Possessed by:** Aetherial Denizens, Theurges, Galliards, Garou Astrologers, Umbral Travelers, Members of the Sept of the Stars

**Specialties:** Planetary Incarnae, Comets, Aetherial Realms, Interpretations, Casting Horoscopes, Planetary Aspects

## Astrological Rites

These rites do not pertain to any one of the astrological signs; they deal with the entirety of the Garou lunar zodiac. Garou who wish to learn any of these rites must possess not only the required Rituals Knowledge but also one or more of the following Knowledges: Astrology, Garou Astrology, Occult or Science. The Storyteller may, of course, decide to substitute other Knowledges for the ones mentioned above. Some of these rites may be available only from certain tribes or auspices. Any character who meets the Knowledges qualification may learn these rites — provided he can find someone who can teach him.

### Rite of the Auspicious Season

Level One

This rite not only honors the Incarna that rules a particular lunar month but also serves to petition that Incarna for help in certain undertakings which involve the Incarna's patronage. Although the basic format of the rite does not change, the specific details such as the songs, dances or incantations, uses of incense or special colors and costumes and the inclusion of symbolic objects appropriate to the Incarna may vary. Garou may perform this rite at any time for any of the planetary Incarnae, though the effects are stronger if the rite coincides with the appropriate astrological month. For example, a rite to gain Nerigal's favor for a coming confrontation with a hive of Black Spiral Dancers may be more effective when conducted in the month ruled by Nerigal or under the full moon, his favored auspice.

**System:** The ritemaster rolls Wits + Rituals (difficulty of 6 if month, auspice or character's tribe corresponds with the Incarna for whom the rite is performed; otherwise, the difficulty is 7). Three successes are necessary to gain the attention and favor of the Incarna unless the rite occurs in the Aetherial Realm. In that case, only one success is necessary. No successes (or fewer than three for rites conducted in the physical world) indicates a simple failure of the rite; a botch gains the Incarna's attention, but not in a favorable manner. If the rite succeeds, all participants may gain a slight bonus to some appropriate Attribute or Ability, or else receive some other sign of the Incarna's favor. The Storyteller can determine what benefits result from a successful performance.

### Rite of Natale

Level Two

Created by the Stargazers as a means of determining the planetary spirits' influences on a particular individual's destiny, this rite enlists the aid of Star-spirits to recreate an image of the sky at the moment of a Garou's birth. This allows the ritemaster to cast a "horoscope" for the subject of the ceremony. Neither the ritemaster nor the subject needs to know the exact moment of the subject's birth, though such knowledge makes the rite easier to perform. The power of the rite enables the spirits to portray the correct configuration of planets and constellations — thus revealing the precise date and time to the participants.

Although originally used only by Stargazers, a few Garou from other tribes who have studied the concepts of Garou astrology have learned the rite from their teachers (in most cases, naturally, a Stargazer).

**System:** The ritemaster rolls Wits + Enigmas, difficulty 7; knowledge of the exact date involved lowers the difficulty to 6. A single success allows the enactor of the rite to determine the ruling planet of a Garou's birth, as well as the subject's auspice. Additional successes provide more detailed knowledge of the positions of the other planets as well as revealing the precise moment of birth. The Storyteller determines the amount of information learned from the rite.

## Mystic Rites

Mystic Rites apply to conditions that occur primarily in the Umbra (including but not exclusive to the Aetherial Realm). Any Garou can learn the following rite as long as she possesses a sufficient score in Rituals and finds a teacher.

### Rite of the Spirit Pass

Level Three

The performance of this rite causes spirits in the Aetherial Realm to accept the Garou's presence in their midst without question. In essence, the Rite of Spirit Pass makes Garou almost invisible to local spirits. Those who do notice the Garou experience a positive alteration of their normal attitudes towards visitors. Friendly spirits become

actively helpful while neutral ones regard the Garou with amicability. Normally hostile spirits restrain their instinctive dislike for the Garou but may become helpful if offered something of value to them. Note that spirits who act as guardians for Incarnae and their realms are not subject to this rite, and may become hostile if it is cast in their vicinity.

A Garou may perform this rite for herself, for another Garou or for a group. Each participant in the rite must undergo a ritual cleansing and a brief period of meditation in order to purge their material forms of anything that might offend the spirits of the Aetherial Realm.

**System:** The Garou spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Charisma + Rituals. One success allows the Garou performing the rite to pass among the spirits without arousing their ire. Each additional success enables the enactor of the rite to affect an additional individual.

## Astrological Gifts

Planetary Gifts are rare within the Garou Nation; Theurges can't readily summon the necessary spirits who teach them. Most of these Gifts can only be learned by questing to the appropriate Incarna's realm and impressing the Incarna there. However, the following Gift is available to most Garou who are capable of summoning Star-spirits — although, as always, the Star-spirits are usually much more impressed if the questing Garou travels to the Aetherial Realm to learn from them.

### Theurge Gift

- **Prophetic Vision (Level Three)** — This Gift enables the Garou to receive a vision of the future based on the study of the night sky. The vision usually reveals itself in astrological terms (*"Lu-Bat's influence suggests an attitude of acceptance toward the events of the next several days"* or *"The intervention of Shantar indicates that changes may occur rapidly in the near future."*) This Gift is taught by a Star-spirit.

**System:** The Garou spends one Gnosis point and rolls Wits + Enigmas (difficulty 7). The number of successes indicates how precise a vision appears to the character. A single success provides vague information, while three or more successes allows the revelation of specific details. Storytellers should couch their visions in symbols appropriate to the Incarna and matter at hand; the seer should have to interpret the vision rather than be spoon-fed.

## Planetary Gifts

These Gifts can only come through contact with the planetary Incarnae or one of their spirit minions. Any Garou can learn any or all of these Gifts, provided she has attained a sufficient Rank to do so, however, some limitations do apply. Garou who possess the favored auspice or tribe of a particular Incarna may learn that Incarna's Gifts at the normal cost in experience points as can Garou who are born (or experience their First Change) during the lunar month

presided over by that Incarna. Other auspices and tribes must pay the experience point cost for learning the Gifts from other tribes or auspices. For example, an Ahroun of any tribe or a Get of Fenris of any auspice may learn any of Nerigal's Gifts at the standard cost for acquiring a new Gift. Likewise, a Garou of any tribe or auspice born during the first lunar month can acquire one of Nerigal's Gifts at standard experience point cost. All other Garou must pay the higher price for the privilege.

Naturally, all the following Gifts are taught either by the planetary Incarna in question or by one of its direct spirit servants.

## Gifts of Nerigal

The Ice Warrior's Gifts all pertain to combat, reflecting both his fierceness and the icy nature of his Rage.

- **Battlesense (Level One)** — The Garou can sense the best direction from which to make an attack, taking into account the terrain of the battlefield, the numbers and placement of the enemy and the available forces at the Garou's command or allied with her.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and becomes aware of the tactical factors involved in an impending battle. The Storyteller informs the player of the numbers and placement of opposing forces. The player can then use this information to her character's advantage.

- **Shards of Icy Rage (Level Two)** — The Garou invoking this Gift calls on the cold power of her Rage, converting her anger into physical ice. This ice cuts as deep as any knife, and can be hurled at her enemies in place of a normal attack.

**System:** The player spends a point of Rage and rolls Wits + Primal-Urge (difficulty 8). The number of successes equals the number of shards that form from the crystallized Rage, up to a limit of five shards. The player makes a separate attack roll for each shard, and may direct them at more than one opponent. Each shard does three dice of aggravated damage; the range is five yards for every dot of the Garou's Strength.

The player may spend only one point of Rage each time the Gift is used; this prohibits spending Rage to gain extra actions in the same turn as invoking the shards. Although a character may use the Gift more than once in a combat, each successive use after the first adds +1 to the difficulty roll to activate the Gift.

- **Nerigal's Call to Arms (Level Three)** — This Gift allows the Garou to summon to her side any creatures or spirits allied to Nerigal or appropriate to the Ice Warrior. These beings, whether Nerigal's spirit warriors or predatory animals, fight alongside the Garou for the duration of an entire battle.

**System:** The Garou spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Charisma + Leadership, difficulty 8. One success summons one or two creatures; additional successes increase the number of creatures or spirits that answer the summons. Thus, two successes bring up to five respondents, three





successes summon up to ten creatures, four successes results in up to 15 beings while five successes brings everything within a five-mile radius of the character. Those creatures summoned serve as an army under the character's command for an entire scene. Of course, if there are no wild predators or War-spirits of Nerigal within range, the Gift fails.

- **Challenge of Single Combat (Level Four)** — By invoking the name of the Ice Warrior and issuing a direct challenge to an enemy, the Garou can force her opponent to fight one-on-one according to the tacit rules of fair play. The opponent can launch no surprise attacks, employ dirty tricks or accept extra help from comrades or pack mates. However, the Garou using this Gift accepts the same restrictions — neither combatant can break off from the fight until one participant either concedes victory to the other or dies.

**System:** After the character has issued the challenge, the player spends a point of Rage and rolls Manipulation + Leadership (difficulty of the target's Willpower). A single success forces the target to forego any unfair tactics and meet the Garou in single combat as described above. No successes means the Gift fails while a botch inspires the target to launch an immediate attack on the character — usually with the help of the opponents' friends.

- **Heart of the Ice Warrior (Level Five)** — Usually used only in the most dire circumstances, this Gift renders the Garou impervious to damage long enough to deliver a final blow to her opponent. The exertion causes the Garou

to collapse, mortally wounded. Unless healed immediately, the Garou dies, having given her all in battle.

**System:** No roll is necessary to invoke the Gift, but the player must spend a point of Rage. The character may not dodge when invoking this Gift, but no damage levied against the Garou will impair her in any way until her attack lands — lightning strikes won't blow her back, and blades can't sever her limbs.

The character makes her next attack at +4 to her attack dice pool. The player may reroll any 1s rolled on this attack — they simply do not count. In addition, any damage rolls gain four extra dice. After delivering her attack, the character falls to Incapacitated. Unless somehow mystically healed by another using Mother's Touch or a similar Gift or fetish (regeneration isn't an option) within the same turn, the character dies at the end of the turn.

## Gifts of Eshtarra

Eshtarra's Gifts pertain either to the Earth and its lore or else reflect the Incarna's nurturing qualities.

- **Earth Sense (Level One)** — The Garou can feel the "aura" of an area and determine if it is healthy or blighted. For a brief instant, the user of the Gift becomes so attuned to the land immediately around her that she can sense the pain of Wyrmtaint, the sickness of pollution or the robust energy of an unspoiled piece of wilderness. In some instances, the

source of an area's pain — or the reason for its health — may reveal itself to the Garou through the use of this Gift.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis. While no roll is necessary, the character must concentrate on the target area for several minutes of game time before receiving any information about its condition. The amount of information revealed is left to the Storyteller and can vary from vague feelings (*"The land doesn't feel well, as if it has been poisoned"*) to extremely specific facts (*"There is an underground spring which channels Gnosis into the topsoil, making the land productive and fertile"*).

- **Herb Call (Level Two)** — Through singing or chanting, a Garou can find helpful or medicinal plants, roots or bark even in poor areas such as deserts. Such plants might be healing herbs, substances useful in rites or tubers and other plants that provide needed sustenance. The song causes the plants to resonate from the music so that the Garou can locate them by following the sounds.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Performance. A single success enables the character to locate the desired herbs or plants within a mile of her location. Additional successes increase the range by one mile per success. Failure means that the character cannot hear any plants, while a botch leads the character to harmful herbs or plants.

- **Oaksong (Level Three)** — By using this Gift, a Garou can communicate with inanimate objects made of wood or some other organic substance (i.e., something that was once alive). The objects do not actually speak, but the Garou can sense their thoughts as images or sensations. For example, a wooden cane might communicate that someone has used it for wilderness travel by filling the Garou's mind with sounds of a crashing waterfall, the musty odor of bear spoor and the image of crowded undergrowth and towering pines. A straight-backed wooden chair might allow a Garou to "see" the person who last occupied it and get a sense of the emotional state of that individual. With practice, a Garou can hold an entire wordless conversation with anything from a sturdy hemp rope or a mat made of woven reeds to a charred scrap of paper (made from wood pulp).

**System:** The user of the Gift must concentrate on what sort of information she wishes to obtain from the object as if she were asking a question. The sensations and images constitute the "answer." The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 7). Each success allows the character to formulate one question and direct it to one item. Additional successes allow the character to ask more questions (on a one-for-one basis) or else ask the same question of different objects. No successes indicate a simple failure of the Gift, while a botch provides the Garou with false or garbled information.

- **Lore of the Land (Level Four)** — By eating, smoking or otherwise taking in a portion of the land, the Garou can sense things that happened in the immediate vicinity in the past. For example, a Garou can mix dandelions from a

meadow into a salad which she eats; as a result, she realizes that a group of hunters passed through the meadow three months ago. By chewing on the bark from a tree, the Garou can learn that a surveyor for a corporation measured the land around the tree as part of a planned site for a new factory or that someone buried a body beneath the tree.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Empathy (difficulty 7). One success gives the character a piece of past information (*"A group of men passed through here several weeks ago"*). Additional successes either embellish on the first piece of information (*"The men wore security guard uniforms"*) or else provide new information about other events (*"A battle took place here last year"*). The information provided will be as pertinent as possible; the character actually learns the most important (to Garou standards) thing or things that happened within the area, most often information that the Garou can act upon.

- **Earth Heal (Level Five)** — This Gift allows the Garou to help a piece of land recover from blight, Wyrmtaint, poisoning, pollution or some other type of environmental disturbance. The Garou gives part of her essence to the damaged land and thus begins a process of renewal that spreads to encompass such details as purifying tainted soil, causing the growth of new plant life or purging signs of the Wyrms' corruption from the designated spot.

**System:** The player sacrifices a permanent point of Gnosis and rolls Wits + Occult (difficulty 7 for naturally caused damage; 8 for Wyrmtaint). Each success contributes to the overall recovery of the designated piece of land; the area can be as large as a few miles, but must constitute a single terrain feature (a lake, forest or mountain, for instance). One success makes minimal but significant improvements in the target area, while five successes results in the area's return (over time) to a state of unspoiled health and fertility. Although this is a potent Gift, it doesn't prevent the healed land from being polluted once more. Even so, offering up one's Gnosis to heal a portion of Gaia is often cause for significant rewards of Honor.

## Gifts of Mitanu

Gifts taught by the Clever Rogue or his spirit helpers involve movement, communication, stealth or thievery.

- **Speed of the Messenger (Level One)** — This Gift increases the movement rate of the Garou so that he can travel long distances in short periods of time. The character's body seems to flow like quicksilver, enabling him to accomplish astounding feats of agility while under the effects of this Gift. Thus, the Garou can travel rapidly across a tree limb or along a narrow wooden beam without slowing down or faltering.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 8). One success allows the character to move at twice her normal speed; two successes gives her three times normal speed, while three successes allows the character to move four times as quickly. More

than three successes cause the character to assume a blurry form that moves too rapidly to track. Use of this Gift also confers two extra dice to any rolls involving Dexterity while the character is in motion. The effect lasts for one turn or one scene, depending on the circumstances. This Gift affects movement only and cannot allow a character to stop to deliver blows in combat without ending the Gift's duration. Thus, a character can use the Gift to get to a combat more quickly, but once she engages in battle, she loses the benefits conferred by the Gift.

- **Sticky Fingers (Level Two)** — This trick coats the fingers of a Garou with a silvery substance that adheres to anything, making it possible to climb slick vertical surfaces with ease. In addition, this Gift also assists a Garou in pilfering small items such as credit cards, keys or loose change.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis. The ability to cling to sheer surfaces is automatic. In addition, the character gains two extra dice to any Streetwise or other roll that the Storyteller deems appropriate; he might get extra dice on a pickpocketing attempt, but not when trying to hot-wire a car. The effect lasts for one scene.

- **Deliberate Misinformation (Level Three)** — The Garou can slip confusing and contrary information into his targets' conversation, making their plans fall apart or otherwise causing them to suffer from a gross breakdown in communications. Opponents in the immediate vicinity of the Garou mishear each other or misinterpret instructions. The information affected by this Gift must be communicated verbally — either in person or through the use of a direct communication device such as a telephone or other transmission device.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Linguistics (difficulty of the target's Willpower — or of the highest Willpower in the target group). Each success allows the character to subject one opponent to the effects of this Gift. All actions that result from information communicated verbally receive a +2 difficulty; simple orders, such as proceeding to a certain address or moving to the left or right flank in battle, automatically go awry. The Gift lasts for one scene or one battle.

- **Mercurial Messenger (Level Four)** — This Gift enables a Garou who overhears a conversation or who is entrusted with a message to remember what she has heard. At a later time, the Garou may repeat back verbatim everything heard over a single scene as if she had total recall. The Gift allows the Garou to reproduce voice intonations, accents and speech patterns or mannerisms which match those of the original speaker. In addition, the Garou can approximate the speaker's actual voice.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Wits + Linguistics (difficulty 7). Each success increases the accuracy of the character's delivery of the remembered conversation or message. If necessary, the Storyteller may repeat the conversation for the benefit of the character's audience. A failure means that the character remembers only what the player remembers. A botch introduces serious discrepancies into the repetition.

- **Madthought (Level Five)** — This trick literally makes the werewolf's foes too clever for their own good. The Garou can cause her enemies' thought processes to speed up so radically that they literally think too rapidly to put any one plan into motion. The victim of this Gift can only stand still as his thoughts run away with him, rushing madly from one brilliant plan to another or considering multiple alternatives for their "next" action.

**System:** The player spends a point of Willpower and rolls Wits + Subterfuge (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). The number of successes determines how many turns the victim stands "lost in thought." When the victim recovers from the Gift, he is most likely highly disoriented, and may need to regain focus and otherwise discover what's been happening while he "was out." A failure simply means that the Gift does not work, while a botch gives the victim not only rapid thought but the ability to translate those thoughts into immediate action — usually to the detriment of the character.

## *Gifts of Sokhta*

Sokhta's Gifts embody the qualities usually associated with the moon — sight, prophecy and changeability.

- **Lambent Sight (Level One)** — This Gift grants the Garou the ability to see under circumstances where sight would normally be impossible, such as in conditions of total darkness (inside a deep cave, for example) or if the Garou is blindfolded. The Gift provides illumination for the Garou equivalent to that of a full moon.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis; no roll is necessary. The effects of this Gift last for one scene. This Gift cannot grant sight to one who is naturally blind.

- **Moonpool of Sokhta (Level Two)** — This Gift enables a Garou to transform clear, standing water into a pool which offers visions of possible futures. Wilderness ponds, small mountain tarns, pools of clear rainwater or even basins filled with water can serve as a conduit for the images. The scenes that appear within the pool depict what might happen unless something occurs to change the course of events. The Garou must concentrate on the event (or series of events) to get a sense of the outcome. The pool may reflect either literal or symbolic images.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Wits + Enigmas (difficulty 7 for near future events, 8 for more distant occurrences). Each success causes one vision of the future to appear within the pool. The Storyteller should determine the clarity and accuracy of the visions. No successes indicate a failure of the Gift, while a botch produces false visions or an extremely chaotic jumble of meaningless images.

- **Moonriver (Level Three)** — By using this Gift, the Garou may swiftly travel across the surface of a body of water which reflects the moonlight. She can follow a river or cross a lake so long as she follows the "trail" of the moon's light. If the light becomes obscured at any point (such as when a cloud passes across the face of the moon), the effects of the Gift end and the Garou may have to swim or wade to shore.





**System:** The player rolls Dexterity + Occult. Only one success is necessary for the character to gain the ability to travel the “moonriver.” The Garou travels across the water with supernatural speed, typically three times her normal movement rate. No successes on the roll indicates that the moon is either not visible or does not shine over a body of water in the character’s vicinity. A botch allows the character to get midway through her journey before the moon’s light fails, thus stranding the character in mid-stream.

• **Mooncat (Level Four)** — This Gift allows the Garou to assume form of a small white cat (one of Sokhta’s favored animals). This ability can prove useful for getting into small places (or escaping from such) and remaining hidden. The Garou has the senses of a cat for the duration of the Gift, including good night sight, the ability to absorb information through her whiskers and extreme flexibility of movement — however, she also retains the power of a full-fledged Garou, and is much more dangerous than she looks. Anyone studying the cat closely can tell that it is not a normal feline because the cat’s eyes always reflect the current phase of the moon regardless of the surrounding light sources.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Dexterity + Animal Ken (difficulty 7). Each success allows the character to remain in cat-form for one scene, although she can end the Gift at any time before its duration runs out.

While in cat form, the Garou retains her Lupus-form Attributes, may soak silver as if it were ordinary damage (although silver damage is still aggravated), and can inflict aggravated damage with claw and bite attacks as usual. No successes means that the Gift fails, while a botch results in a transformation into a misshapen creature somewhere between a cat and a wolf. The character may choose to end the Gift immediately if this happens.

• **Moon Dream (Level Five)** — The Garou petitions Sokhta to grant her a prophetic dream before she falls asleep beneath the light of the moon. She then enters a state of lucid dreaming in which she explores some potential future. The Garou may interact with the creatures and situations she encounters in the dream and, thus, learn the possible effects of certain actions upon the subject of the dream. The Garou may replay the dream several times in order to test various actions and their consequences until she awakens from the dream, eight hours later. Once the Garou has entered her Moon Dream, she may not be awakened until the full eight hours has passed.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Wits + Enigmas. The number of successes indicates the degree of control the character has over her part in the dream. The Storyteller may either take the player aside to run the dream privately or else create a scene that involves

the entire troupe (particularly if the subject of the dream includes the character's pack mates). The dream should give a reasonably accurate picture of the next two or three scenes so that the character may experiment with ways of handling the future or, perhaps, changing it. No successes means that the character receives no dream while a botch gives the character an eight-hour long nightmare which she cannot remember but which results in a -1 penalty to all rolls involving Alertness.

## *Gifts of Katanka-Sonnak*

The Gifts which originate with the Wind Rider deal with the fiery energies of action or battle and make use of aspects generally associated with the sun.

• **Find the Heart's Flame (Level One)** — With this Gift the Garou can identify sources of energy or power, even when they are hidden or unfamiliar. The Garou must concentrate to detect the pulsations of power that emanate from even a dormant energy source. This becomes useful when traveling in some of the more alien reaches of the Umbra where familiar objects take on strange appearances. This Gift also enables the Garou to identify machinery such as generators or solar batteries regardless of their appearance or attempts to conceal them. Spirits that serve as energy or power foci also register to the Garou's senses when this Gift is in effect.

**System:** The player spends one point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Alertness (difficulty 7). A single success

identifies power sources that lie within 50 feet of the Garou. Additional successes allow the character to extend her range to locate distant sources. This Gift lasts for one scene.

• **Flame of the Wind Rider (Level Two)** — This Gift makes the Garou harder to damage by engulfing her in a ghostly blue-white flame. In addition to serving as a form of armor, the flame also offers protection from cold, including the intense cold of the far reaches of the Aetherial Realm and the freezing damage inflicted by certain creatures of the Wyrn.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Stamina + Occult (difficulty 7). Each success lowers the difficulty for soaking damage from cold by one. In addition, the Garou gains two dice to add to all soak rolls; these dice can even be used to soak silver. The effects last for one scene.

• **Ride the Solar Winds (Level Three)** — This Gift allows the Garou to ride the solar winds that sweep through the Aetherial Realm without worrying about being thrown off course by storms. Use of this Gift also increases the Garou's movement rate, lessening the travel time between locations within the Aetherial Realm.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Wits + Alertness (difficulty 7); the need to remain "in touch" with the ever-changing currents of these spirit winds requires concentration and attunement rather than physical agility. A single success allows the character to ride the winds successfully to her destination (or until she decides to end her journey). Additional successes either allow the



Garou to carry others with her (on a one-for-one basis) or reduce the travel time by half per success. Thus, with one additional success, a journey of one month would only take two weeks, while two additional successes reduces the journey to a week. A character may use some of her extra success to allow others to travel with her and the remaining ones to speed up travel time. No successes indicates either that the solar winds are not available for use or denotes failure to locate them. A botch means that the winds seize the character and carry her to some unintended destination (at the Storyteller's discretion).

• **Hand of the Sun (Level Four)** — The Garou's hand blazes with a terrible heat and gives off a white-hot light, similar to a branding iron. The Garou may touch an individual and mark them indelibly (and painfully) with a brand of shame. Any Garou who encounter the victim in the future immediately recognize the mark as a sign of that person's treachery, dishonor or other grave crime. Vampires ignite when touched by the Hand of the Sun.

**System:** The Garou spends a point of Rage and a point of Gnosis. No roll is necessary for the Gift to take effect, but the character must make a standard attack roll in order to mark her victim. A victim touched by the Hand of the Sun takes two health levels of unsoakable aggravated damage and receives a permanent circular scar. The scar cannot be removed by any means short of amputating the part of the body which contains the scar. The fire lasts for one scene, although the Garou may extinguish it beforehand if she so chooses.

• **Cleansing Flame (Level Five)** — The Garou can pinpoint an area (or an individual) and set the target ablaze with an intense and purifying flame that rages for 60 seconds and then dies out completely. The fire can burn out all Wyrmtaint or human-made pollution from an area or cleanse an individual (provided the victim survives) of Wyrmtaint. The fire does not spread beyond the target area or person and can not be quenched by normal means. For instance, if the Garou targets a house occupied by a Pentex official, the fire blazes through the house destroying any vestige of the Wyrms' corruption and leaving untouched anything not tainted by the Wyrms.

**System:** The player sacrifices a permanent point of Rage and rolls her Willpower. The difficulty is 8 to affect an area; the area cannot be larger than a large house. To target an individual, the difficulty of the Willpower roll equals the victim's Willpower. Living or undead creatures set on fire must roll their Stamina (difficulty 9) or die from the shock. The flame destroys fomori utterly; Black Spiral Dancers who survive the Stamina roll must make Gnosis rolls, difficulty 9, or lose their Wyrmtaint and its accompanying Derangement. Such purified Garou are stripped of all Rank and Gifts; they may well fall again to corruption, but they are given a second chance.

A failure on the Willpower roll indicates that the Garou fails to activate the Gift, while a botch inflicts one unsoakable health level of aggravated damage on the wielder.

## Gifts of Hakahe

Hakahe's Gifts involve using darkness and secrecy. They also allow the user to expose the defects of others to their disadvantage.

• **Uncloak the Hidden (Level One)** — By concentrating on a person, object or area, the Garou can determine whether or not her target is hiding anything. The Garou can spot disguises, concealed weapons and wires; determine if a room contains trapdoors, hidden cameras, microphones and wire taps; or if someone lurks in a hidden passage. The Gift does not, however, allow the Garou to seek beneath the disguise, determine the nature of a concealed weapon or tell what lies within a hidden wall safe — this trick reveals only that a deception is present. The Garou must concentrate on the target in order to invoke this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Investigation (difficulty 8). Extra successes might reveal more facts about the subject, if multiple secrets exist to be sought out. The Storyteller should inform the player of her character's knowledge in general terms. (*"That man has some sort of disguise"; "The floor contains a hollow beneath the floorboards."*)

• **Shadow of the Ebon Whisperer (Level Two)** — This Gift makes the Garou as insubstantial as a shadow and as hard to see. The physical form of the Garou fades to a murky, dark shape that can slither and flow almost anywhere. Although others can use certain Gifts to spot the "shadow" werewolf, anyone wishing to do so must first have a reason to suspect the presence of the Gift's user. This Gift does not function in bright daylight or in places where no shadows exist — such as a brightly lit room (or a room in total darkness, for that matter).

**System:** The player spends a point of Willpower and rolls Appearance + Occult (difficulty as assigned by the Storyteller depending on the surroundings). Each success allows the character to assume the shadow-form for one scene (or one combat round); even one success can give the character the advantage of surprise in a battle. No successes means that the Gift fails while a botch throws the character across the Gauntlet momentarily and does not conceal the Garou upon her return.

• **Hidden Heart (Level Three)** — This Gift allows the Garou to take a dangerous piece of knowledge she possesses and lock it away in her mind so that it becomes inaccessible without a key. The concealed information cannot be taken from her through mental powers or coercion; she can neither access the information nor remember that she has hidden something away in her mind. Until someone speaks the trigger word, performs the appropriate gesture or enacts the conditions set forth in the activation of the Gift, the Garou remains blissfully unaware of the information she has hidden from everyone — including herself.

**System:** Before using this Gift, the Garou must set the conditions which will cause the information to become available to her. This information should be given to a





trusted ally — after all, the Garou herself won't even remember that she *has* a key word, much less a secret. After deciding upon the trigger, the player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls the character's Willpower (difficulty 8). Only one success is necessary for the Gift to take effect. The effect of the Gift lasts until the hidden information is triggered.

- **Whisper in the Dark (Level Four)** — This Gift allows the Garou to determine a fact detrimental to an individual. The Garou may then use that piece of knowledge against the target of the Gift, either by holding it over the victim's head or making the information public.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Empathy (difficulty 8). Each success enables her to grasp one piece of heretofore-unknown information about the target of the Gift. Thus, a character can learn that an individual owes millions of dollars in gambling debts, hides a murder in his past or funds a company that systematically pollutes the rivers in a particular state. Failure means that the character learns nothing, while a botch provides the character with erroneous information leading to the character's possible embarrassment or dishonor.

- **Ebon Binding (Level Five)** — This Gift allows the Garou to take her knowledge of someone's fault, practice or secret vice and bind a fitting punishment to that person. Most often, the target suffers crippling pain whenever he

thinks of indulging in the forbidden action. The Garou may use this Gift to prevent rapists, child molesters, murderers or traitors from repeat offenses (assuming the Garou allows these individuals to live in the first place).

**System:** The player must sacrifice a point of permanent Gnosis and roll her Willpower (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Only one success is necessary to make the binding permanent. A failed roll means that the binding is unsuccessful while a botch causes the character to undergo the mental or physical pain she intended to bind to her target — a one-time-only occurrence.

## *Gifts of Tambiyah*

Tambiyah's Gifts pertain to protection, defense and personal relationships.

- **Find the Child Within (Level One)** — With this Gift, a Garou can play upon an individual's instinctive response to parental authority or affection and convince that person to follow a command ("Don't leave without me") or respond favorably to a suggestion ("Let me take you somewhere safe") that they might otherwise rebuff. The target of the Gift cannot already be engaged in battle with the Gift's user or with another opponent. The Garou can, however, use this Gift to forestall an impending battle or elude a situation that might turn dangerous.

**System:** The player makes a resisted Charisma + Empathy roll against the target's Willpower. One success allows the character to make a simple suggestion to the victim; the suggestion must be one that a young child would find reasonable. Additional successes either extend the duration of the effect or else enable the character to convince her victim to do something he might not be otherwise inclined to do — such as coercing a Get Ahroun to back down from a fight he would certainly lose. Failure means that the suggestion has no effect, while a botch angers the victim and makes him impervious to further attempts to use this Gift for 24 hours.

• **Mantle of the Land (Level Two)** — The Garou draws forth a mist or fog from water in the atmosphere. This misty mantle provides cover in which a Garou may hide herself or someone under her protection. The Gift may be used while the Garou is in motion in order to confuse pursuers by enveloping them in an obscuring fog. The mantle can also surround a Garou and her pack in order to allow them to attack from concealment or ambush.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis. The fog is dense and heavy, obscuring the vision of anyone within, even muffling sound. Anyone save the Garou and his pack are at +3 difficulty on all Perception rolls while the mist endures. This Gift lasts for one scene or one combat.

• **Veil of the Mother (Level Three)** — This Gift allows the Garou to assume a different appearance for a short period of time in order to confuse pursuers or escape detection. Primarily useful in Homid form, the Veil of the Mother alters the physical features of the face, causes the user to seem either shorter or taller by up to six inches and changes the body size to reflect a gain or loss of up to 30 pounds. The Gift does not alter the sex or age of the Garou, though it can change skin, hair or eye color and hair texture or length. The Garou may use the Gift on herself or on another individual, usually someone she is trying to hide or draw attention away from.

**System:** The player spends a Willpower point and rolls Appearance + Subterfuge (difficulty 7). The number of successes indicates the degree to which the character can alter her appearance or that of another individual. One success allows only minor changes in height, weight, facial features, skin tone and other similar qualities. Three successes causes a complete change in appearance, while five or more successes enables the character to effect a drastic change in her physical form, even to the extent of appearing to be a specific person. (The Garou must, of course, be familiar with the appearance of anyone whose form she assumes.) No successes represent a simple failure, while a botch causes some gross malfunction of the disguise. The effect of this Gift lasts for one scene.

• **Motherly Guardian (Level Four)** — This Gift allows the Garou to “tag” an individual so that she can keep track of her target's health and welfare. The Garou gains a general sense of the individual's location at all times and can sense when the target is in trouble and needs assistance. The Gift lets the Garou know what kind of aid the target needs. The Garou must

concentrate on her target in order to gain these insights. The effects of the Gift remain in place for a full cycle of the moon.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Empathy (difficulty of the target's Willpower) to set the “tag” on the designated individual. Whenever she concentrates on that person, she receives information about the target's general state of health and present circumstances. A failed roll means that the character is unable to tag the individual while a botch means that the character either places the tag on the wrong person or else receives erroneous information. When the character attempts to concentrate on the targeted individual, she performs all other actions at a +1 difficulty due to her preoccupation with her charge.

• **Bring Forth the Future (Level Five)** — This Gift allows the Garou to call upon Tambiyah to change one facet of an individual's future. The change must be specific, such as preventing the subject of the Gift from encountering a known situation that will result in her certain death. While this Gift does not guarantee that a foreseen future will be altered, it does allow the Garou to attempt to avert disaster or improve an individual's lot.

**System:** The player sacrifices a permanent point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 8). Only one success is necessary to effect a change in a future event. The player should explain to the Storyteller which element of the future even she wishes to alter. (For example, “I want my packmate to survive the coming battle against the fomori horde.”) If possible, the Storyteller should arrange events so that the change takes place exactly as stated. The Gift only affects events that will occur within the 24 hours immediately following the activation of the Gift; furthermore, characters cannot ensure the death or destruction of their foes with this power. Only pleas for preservation meet with the Veiled Mother's approval.

## *Gifts of Meros*

The Gifts taught under the direction of Meros have to do with transitions, transformations and life and death situations.

• **Sense of the Transformation (Level One)** — With this Gift, the Garou can identify states of transformation or significant changes within creatures or objects. This Gift allows the Garou to ascertain whether or not someone is dying of a disease or if a female is pregnant (even in extremely early stages). In the same fashion, the Garou can choose to determine if an object is about to break or cease functioning. The Garou need only concentrate on her target to activate this Gift.

**System:** No roll is necessary, but the player must spend a point of Gnosis to activate the Gift for one scene. During that time the character can determine the general state of health (or illness) of the individuals or creatures in her vicinity. She can also tell if inanimate objects are on the verge of breaking down or otherwise ceasing to function.

• **Shorten the Road (Level Two)** — This Gift enables the Garou to cut normal travel time by a third, even in the

Umbra. This feat may take shape in a number of ways — either through a series of fortunate coincidences or else through clearly supernatural means.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Manipulation + Survival (difficulty 7). A successful roll shortens a journey by a third so that a three-day trip takes only two days, while a two-week long trek through unspoiled wilderness only takes ten days. A failure has no effect on the length of the journey, while a botch doubles the travel time.

• **Wyld Spirits (Level Three)** — The Garou can call upon Meros' erratic nature and inflict one or more of her opponents with a bout of erratic behavior, thus making it more difficult for the victims to coordinate attacks or act sensibly in any given situation.

**System:** The player spends a point of Willpower and rolls Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). Each success allows the character to affect one individual. Affected targets fail to carry out any sustained course of action, attacking one minute and retreating the next or else stopping still to make a speech. If the Gift is used in a non-combat situation, the victims change their actions radically from one moment to the next. This Gift lasts for one scene or one battle.

• **Sleep's Travels (Level Four)** — Through this Gift, a Garou's spirit may journey to another location while his body sleeps. Once he has arrived at his destination, the Garou may either examine his surroundings, impart a message to someone he meets or retrieve a small (hand-held) item such as a ring, a set of keys or a piece of paper. Whether the Garou actually causes an object to assume spirit-form long enough for her to transport it from the place he has visited to the location of his sleeping body, or if the Gift causes the retrieved item to relocate from one place to another is unclear. The Garou must have at least four hours of uninterrupted sleep before he is able to begin the sleep journey. Once the journey has ended and the Garou's spirit has reunited itself with her body, he must awaken naturally. Any disturbance in his sleep pattern negates the effectiveness of the Gift, though it does not otherwise physically threaten the Garou's life.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Wits + Occult (difficulty 8). One success enables the character to travel to the desired spot in his dreams and look around. He may overhear conversations but may not participate in them. Additional successes increase his ability to interact with what lies at his journey's end. Three successes allows him to converse with individuals he meets (who, if he so chooses, see him as if he is really present) while five successes are necessary for the character to transport a physical object to his sleeping form. No successes means that the character simply gets a good night's sleep, while a botch not only means that the sleep journey fails but may cause serious disruptions to the character's future sleep patterns or give the character a Derangement.

• **Essential Transformation (Level Five)** — This Gift allows the Garou to convert part of her essence into Gnosis for use in situations which require the expenditure of large amounts of spiritual power. The Garou can either use the Gnosis gained by this Gift to create or replenish fetishes, enact Gifts that require Gnosis or for any other purpose that requires her to spend Gnosis. However, its residual effects are cumulative. Each use of this Gift imbues the Garou's physical and mental abilities with more and more "spirit substance" until eventually she becomes a spirit creature lacking in material substance. When this happens, the Garou can no longer maintain her earthly existence and must either relocate to the Umbra as a permanent resident (not unlike the members of the Sept of the Stars) or else "die" and allow her spirit to return to Gaia.

**System:** The player rolls Willpower (difficulty 9). Only one success is necessary for the character to convert one dot in a chosen Attribute into 10 points of temporary Gnosis. Until the character uses all 10 of these points (or stores them in a fetish), she has one less dot in the chosen Attribute. When the converted Gnosis is depleted, the Attribute returns to its normal level. However, the Storyteller (and the character) should keep track of the number of times this Gift is used. When the character has used this Gift a number of times equal to her total number of dots in Physical, Mental and Social Attributes, her body loses its material substance and the character becomes a spirit. The character's fate once this occurs is left to the Storyteller's discretion, although in most cases this means that the player must retire the character from active play.

## Gifts of Zarok

Zarok's Gifts pertain to abilities useful in leadership and planning.

• **Aura of Leadership (Level One)** — Similar to the Level Two Silver Fang Gift: Awe, this Gift surrounds the Garou with an aura of authority that enables her to assume the mantle of leadership for a brief period of time. Others react to the Garou as if she were their pack leader — including the pack leader herself. Of course, there may be repercussions after the effects of the Gift have passed.

**System:** The player rolls Charisma + Empathy (difficulty of the highest Willpower in the target group). If successful, the difficulties of all Social rolls against the target group are reduced by one. One success enables the character to affect a single target. Additional successes increases the number of individuals who fall under the effects of the Gift. The effects of the Gift last for one scene.

• **Proclamation of Action (Level Two)** — This Gift enables the Garou to force an end to discussion and take the course of action the character thinks is best. The werewolf can literally command others to act as he bids, although only if they had been previously dithering over a course of action.

**System:** The player spends a Willpower point and rolls Charisma + Leadership to put a damper on discussions that





have gone on too long. ("Enough talk. Let's do it!") One success allows the character to affect a single target. Each additional success increases the number of individuals affected by one. A failure means that the Gift has no effect, while a botch makes the targets turn a deaf ear to the character's suggestions for the rest of the scene. A character desiring to resist the effects of the Gift must make a Willpower roll (difficulty of the Gift user's Willpower + 1, up to a maximum of 10). This Gift lasts for one scene.

• **Undisputed Ruler (Level Three)** — This Gift allows a Garou to take over the leadership of a small gathering of humans (whether a paramilitary group or town council) or a group of spirits for a period of up to six months. During this time, the targeted group accepts the Garou as their leader, rendering her the honor, respect and obedience due her position. The group demonstrates a high degree of loyalty, obeying the Garou's orders without question or hesitation (if the group is an army of some sort) or accepting the Garou's decisions as legal and binding (if the group consists of a town council, religious cult or other social organization). If the Garou uses this Gift in the Umbra, the targeted group of spirits will follow the Garou's commands as if she were a greater spirit such as an Incarna. This Gift lasts anywhere from a week to six months.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Charisma + Leadership (difficulty of the highest Willpower

in the target group). One success enables the character to exercise her authority over the group for a week. Two successes extends the period to a month, while three successes give the character leadership for two months. Four successes extends the period to four months, while five successes allows the character six months of undisputed rule. This Gift is only effective against mortals and spirits of no greater than Jaggling status, although "borderline" supernaturals such as ghouls and Kin are susceptible. A failure means that the Gift does not take effect. A botch turns the group against the character.

• **Enthronement (Level Four)** — The Garou can create small or simple objects out of thin air — including mist, clouds or wind. By shaping the air around him with his hands, the Garou may form a solid block of matter to serve as a chair, create a bowl or cup for holding liquid or construct some other useful item. Alternately, the Garou can form small, stone-sized balls of air to use as hurled weapons against his enemies. The items last until the Garou disperses them.

**System:** The player simply rolls Dexterity + Repair (difficulty 7). The character may form one small item of solidified air for each success, or use two or more successes to shape a larger item (such as a throne-like seat). "Air-stones" used as weapons do the character's Strength + 1 normal damage, and dissipate upon contact with their target (or any other solid substance). In addition, the victim must make a Stamina roll (difficulty 8)

to remain on her feet when the "air-stone" discharges its mass. If she fails the Stamina roll, the victim is stunned for the remainder of the round and can take no action.

- **Grand Gesture (Level Five)** — By bestowing appropriate gifts on an individual or a group, the Garou increases her esteem and reputation in the eyes of the recipients of her largesse. The targets of this Gift tend to listen favorably to suggestions made by the Gift's user and to support her arguments or come to her aid in a battle of words or weapons. The Gift lasts for an entire scene. When the effects of the Gift come to an end, the individuals affected may still continue to regard the Garou with some residual respect depending on their experiences while the Gift was active.

**System:** The player rolls Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty of the highest Willpower in the target group). Each success allows her to affect one individual. While the Gift is in effect, all Gifts or Social rolls involving persuasion are automatically successful against the affected individuals. No successes indicates that the Gift has no effect while a botch makes the targeted person or group resent the character, who suffers a penalty of +1 to the difficulty of Social rolls for the remainder of the scene.

## *Gifts of Lu-Bat*

The Gifts which come from Lu-Bat generally involve diplomacy or else deal with the understanding and acceptance of limitations.

- **Sense Limits (Level One)** — The Garou can determine the amount of Rage, Gnosis or Willpower within an individual. This ability enables the Garou to judge whether or not her target can resist an attempt to influence her actions or whether she is likely to draw upon her supply of either Gnosis or Rage. This Gift also allows a Garou to gauge whether or not other supernaturals are currently weak-willed or drained of some other source of power. For example, a Garou may tell that a vampire has little power but may not realize that the Leech's blood supply is low. This Gift also enables a Garou to sense whether an Umbral spirit's Power is weak or near depletion.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Occult (difficulty 8). Each success enables the character to determine the general levels of Rage, Gnosis and Willpower for one targeted individual. Additional successes allow the character access to more specific information about a single target or else gives her general information about another target. The Storyteller should not give the player precise numbers but should relay information in relative terms. ("The Black Spiral has used most of his Rage but still has a lot of Willpower and Gnosis left." "The mage has plenty of magical energy left within her.") A failure means that the character learns nothing about her target while a botch gives her erroneous information.

- **Peace of the Counselor (Level Two)** — This Gift enables a Garou to bring even the most heated discussion to a peaceful conclusion. Though it does not preclude further

hostilities from erupting at a later time, the Gift creates an atmosphere of temporary truce among enemies or prevents tribe leaders from coming to blows over volatile issues. During the grace period, the Garou can attempt to resolve the circumstances underlying the state of enmity — such as encouraging the participants in a dispute to begin negotiations or achieving a compromise.

**System:** The player spends a Willpower point and rolls Charisma + Empathy (difficulty of the highest Willpower among the quarreling individuals). One success causes combatants to stop fighting (or prevents them from initiating combat) for one turn. Each extra success increases the length of time in which peace prevails by an additional turn; five successes extend the Gift to an entire scene. No successes means that the Gift has no effect on the situation, while a botch causes an escalation of force and frequently draws the character attempting to use the Gift into the heart of the battle.

- **Pall of Despair (Level Three)** — This Gift inflicts a wave of despair upon a targeted individual, making the victim incapable of action due to feelings of profound melancholy.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty of the target's Willpower). A successful roll causes the victim to experience a feeling similar to Harano (or, in the case of humans, clinical depression). This state of mind forces the victim to roll her Willpower in order to take any action, while combat becomes almost impossible. (Optionally, the Storyteller can enforce the limitations of Harano found in the *Werewolf Players Guide*, pg. 207.) The effects of the Gift last for one scene.

- **Harmonious Slumber (Level Four)** — This Gift enables the Garou to create a perfect environment for sleep even in the most difficult circumstances. Under the influence of this Gift, the Garou receives the equivalent of eight hours of restful sleep and awakens refreshed and with his spirits revived.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Stamina + Enigmas (difficulty 7). One success is necessary to affect the character. Each additional success allows him to include another individual in the effects of the Gift. A failure means that the Gift does not work, while a botch inflicts restless sleep on the character, with no benefits. When the character awakens from a successful use of this Gift, he finds that his Gnosis is fully replenished. The nap can last for up to eight hours, although only two hours are necessary to reap full benefits.

- **Burden of Knowledge (Level Five)** — The Garou floods an individual with the knowledge of all her own limitations, making the victim aware of every flaw or failing and reminding her of all the wrongs she has committed or caused. The weight of this enlightenment can either change an individual for the better or drive her into suicidal despair or murderous frenzy. Few individuals survive the effects of this Gift unscathed. This Gift can sometimes bring an errant Garou back from the edge of corruption or cause an enemy of the Garou to be "born again."

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Intelligence + Empathy (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). Success causes the victim to experience every negative aspect of her personality and past, including secret vices, shortcomings, failures, and other similar faults. The Storyteller should decide what ultimate effect the Gift produces in the victim — either a desire to reform her ways and correct her failings, an impulse to kill herself out of shame and despair, or some course of action in between the two extremes. Once the victim has experienced the total effect of the Gift, the intense awareness begins to fade — but residual memories may plague the victim for a long time afterward.

## Gifts of Ruatma

Ruatma's Gifts involve the learning of secrets or situations involving the expanding of boundaries — physical or otherwise.

- **Find the Portent (Level One)** — With this Gift, a Garou can call for and receive some omen or portent which can help her determine her next course of action. The Garou must meditate for a few minutes in order to place herself in a receptive state so that she can recognize the sign that comes to her.

**System:** No roll is necessary, but the player must spend a point of Gnosis. The Storyteller then produces some sort of omen or portent to serve as a hint for the character about what lies in the future. ("A black bird carrying something in its beak flies overhead, heading north." "You feel a sense of dread about entering this part of the forest.")

- **Hidden Depths (Level Two)** — This Gift allows a Garou to uncover some hidden piece of information, or to decipher some cryptic passage of text. The Gift can also enable a Garou to figure out who the real power behind the scenes is in a given situation.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 8). Each success allows the character to learn one hidden or concealed fact about the person, place or thing targeted by the Gift. For example, one line of a prophecy may be explained for each success. The Storyteller should decide the overall effects of this Gift so that players do not attempt to avoid pursuing other avenues of investigation.

- **Unravel (Level Three)** — This Gift allows the Garou to put together seemingly random bits of information to form a tentative analysis of a situation and formulate a course of action. This is particularly useful in situations where gathering concrete information is difficult or in extremely complex circumstances.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Intelligence + Enigmas (difficulty 7). Only one success is necessary to make some basic sense out of even the most confusing situation, but each additional success further clarifies matters. (The player may ask the Storyteller to explain to her what is actually going on in a given scene and use that information as character knowledge.) A failure means that the character cannot make sense of a situation while a botch





means that the character puts together a totally false scenario and draws erroneous conclusions from her "knowledge."

- **Blank Slate (Level Four)** — The Garou can completely remove a single piece of information from her own mind or from that of another. This Gift becomes useful in situations where an individual has come across some dangerous knowledge that might lead to her death for possessing it. The Garou may not only remove the information — such as the identity of a Garou mole within a hostile group or the location of a safehouse for eco-terrorists — but she may also smooth over the edges of the victim's memory so that he does not realize that anything is missing. The Garou may also use this Gift to alter her own memories in situations where she feels that this is necessary.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). A single success allows the character to excise the desired piece of information. Additional successes enable the character to make secondary adjustments to the target's memory to hide the fact that something is missing. No successes means that the victim retains the memory although she may not be aware that someone has tried to tamper with her mind. A botch may either remove the memory along with other chunks of information or else alert the victim to the unsuccessful attempt so that she knows who has tried to erase parts of her memory.

- **Diplomatic Immunity (Level Five)** — This Gift enables the Garou to walk about in the midst of a hostile group without provoking the outbreak of hostilities. The Garou can enter a caern belonging to a rival or walk openly into the middle of a group of Black Spiral Dancers in order to retrieve something or deliver a message. The Garou surrounds herself with an aura of "neutrality" that negates her enemies' or rivals' animosity long enough for her to accomplish her task and leave without incident. The Gift lasts for one scene, after which all bets are off.

**System:** The player spends a point of Willpower and rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty 8). A successful roll allows the character to interact with a group of potential enemies for the purpose of delivering a message, retrieving an item or issuing an ultimatum. A failure means that the Gift does not take effect (in which case the character would be wise to avoid confronting the intended group). A botch means that the character believes the Gift is in effect — a belief which will more than likely disappear as soon as she encounters the opposing group.

## *Gifts of Shantar*

Shantar's Gifts revolve around the processes of creation and invention, including the destruction necessary for renewal.

- **Threads of the Tapestry (Level One)** — This Gift allows the Garou to determine the basic elements of a situation that seems confused or deliberately obfuscated. The Garou can discern which individual in a group really holds power or whether someone is acting under duress.

**System:** The player rolls Wits + Enigmas (difficulty 7). Each success allows the character to uncover one basic behind-the-scenes fact, usually the leader of a group or the emotional context of an otherwise poker-faced contact. Failure denotes an inability to find out anything beyond the obvious about a situation, while a botch produces incorrect conclusions.

- **Fixit (Level Two)** — The Garou can figure out what's wrong with a device and make on-the-spot repairs which allow the item to run or function for a short time.

**System:** The player rolls Intelligence + Repair (difficulty 7). One success allows the character to repair the targeted item so that it functions for one turn. Two successes enable the item to work for one scene while three successes or more indicates that the item has been permanently repaired, barring excessive use or subsequent damage. Failure means the character cannot repair the item, while a botch renders the device unable to be repaired by anyone — ever.

- **Tangling the Skein (Level Three)** — This Gift enables the Garou to cause confusion among her enemies by mixing up their perceptions so that they cannot decide who to follow or what to do next. The effect resembles that of the Gift: Mitanu's Deliberate Misinformation, except it distorts what others discern through sight or memory rather than through what they hear. Victims may mistake one person for another and follow the wrong leader or they may go to the wrong meeting place in the mistaken impression that they are proceeding to the correct spot.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Manipulation + Enigmas (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). Each success allows the character to alter one visual or remembered perception for her victim. She can cause a Black Spiral Dancer to confuse the weakest member of his pack for his pack leader or make a rival show up at the wrong caern for an important meeting. No successes means that the Gift fails, while a botch actually arranges the victim's perceptions so that they work against the character rather than the victim.

- **Shantar's Loom (Level Four)** — The use of this Gift enables the Garou to craft some item from the energy provided by either Gnosis, Rage or Willpower. The item may not involve multiple parts or have an overly complex make-up. For example, a Garou cannot make a gun using this Gift, but she can craft a dagger or hunting knife. Although this Gift can't produce radioactive materials, it can produce metals such as silver.

**System:** The Garou spends either a Gnosis, Rage or Willpower point and rolls Dexterity + Repair (difficulty 8 for simple items, 9 for more sophisticated ones). (The Storyteller may allow the player to substitute a more appropriate secondary skill possessed by the character for the Repair Ability.) One success produces the item desired, while additional successes refine its quality and durability. The Storyteller may require three successes to make an item from a less appropriate quality — such as making a blanket for a cradle by using a point of Rage, or using anything other than Gnosis to craft a silver knife. No successes means that

the Gift fails to produce anything useful and allows the expended point to revert to the character. A botch uses up the expended point and produces an unusable or defective item. The item lasts for one day per success.

- **Drown (Level Five)** — This Gift causes the lungs of an opponent to fill with liquid. The victim must receive immediate medical or magical assistance or die within a few minutes. The target of the Gift can attempt to help herself but she can do nothing else except try to expel the fluid. This Gift can either function as a way to capture an opponent, render an enemy helpless or inflict punishment on an individual.

**System:** The player spends a point of Rage and rolls her Willpower (difficulty of the victim's Willpower). Only one success is necessary to activate this Gift. The victim must receive help immediately or else die from drowning. The victim may attempt to help herself by trying to cough up or otherwise expel the fluid, but she can take no other actions (including movement away from her surroundings) while she is making the attempt. No successes means the Gift fails, while a botch inflicts the Gift upon the character attempting to use it.

## *Gifts of Rorg*

Rorg's Gifts assist Garou in battle and enhance the physical and instinctual capabilities of those who use them.

- **Rouse to Anger (Level One)** — This Gift enables the Garou to say or do something that causes her target to refresh her inner Rage. This might involve shaming an individual, slapping her in the face or telling her something to arouse her anger. The Garou can also summon within herself a memory or an emotion that assists her in replenishing her own capacity for righteous anger.

**System:** The player rolls Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty 8) and spends a Gnosis point. A successful roll enables the character to speak or act in such a way that her target gains a point of Rage. Each additional success allows the character to affect another individual, including herself. A botch removes a point of Rage from the target.

- **Foetracker (Level Two)** — By using this Gift, the Garou can follow her quarry without risking losing the trail. The scent of the target becomes so powerful to the Garou that she can follow it even under conditions that might otherwise obscure the trail. Even if the victim crosses water, lays down a false trail or attempts to mask his scent with some other odor, the Garou unerringly follows her prey. However, the Gift's effects become fainter with time and distance.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Primal Urge. Each success allows the character to track her target unerringly for one scene up to a maximum of five scenes, after which the effects of the Gift end and the trail becomes too faint to follow. No successes means that the Gift fails to take effect, while a botch sends the character in a false direction.

- **Savagery of the Taloned Hunter (Level Three)** — This Gift allows a Garou to gain twice the advantage of his Rage, thus increasing the ferocity and frequency of his



attacks or else allowing him to accomplish more under stress than he normally would.

**System:** The player spends a Rage point which he may then convert into the equivalent of two points of Rage for the character. This enables a character to take two extra actions in a combat at the cost of the Rage point. Another use of the Gift allows the character to recover from a stunned state and take an extra action (as if he had spent a point of Rage to offset the stun and a point of Rage to gain an additional action) in the same turn. The Storyteller should make the final determination as to how the character may use the advantage gained from this Gift. This Gift cannot be used continuously, though; the Garou may call on its effects once per story for every point of Willpower he possesses.

- **Hunter's Horn (Level Four)** — This Gift enables the Garou to create a sound so horrible and mind-chilling that it sends enemies into utter panic and causes them to flee an area without regard for direction or destination. Enemies so affected cannot attempt to evade pursuit or disguise their passage. This makes hunting them down and dispatching them a fairly simple task.

**System:** The player spends a point of Rage and rolls Manipulation + Primal-Urge (difficulty of the highest Willpower in the target group). Each success affects one victim with uncontrollable panic, causing them to run blindly from an area. Garou affected by this Gift enter a state of fox frenzy, while others simply become mindless panicked creatures of prey. The effect lasts for an entire scene, during which time the character (and any allies) may hunt down and slay the victims if they so desire. No successes represents a simple failure of the Gift, while a botch affects the user of the Gift instead of her intended victim or victims.

- **Pack Mind (Level Five)** — This Gift forces a group of foes to behave like a single-minded pack. All individuals must perform the same task at the same time regardless of its appropriateness to a given situation. For example, if one individual fights, all the others fight; if one person attempts to sneak up behind an opponent, all the others make this attempt as well. This Gift lasts for one combat scene.

**System:** The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Willpower (difficulty 8). A single success allows the character to inflict Pack Mind on a group of up to four individuals. Additional successes allow the character to increase the number of people affected in increments of two; five successes, therefore, enables the character to affect twelve individuals. For the duration of this Gift, all the affected victims mimic the actions of their leader — or, more typically, the first person in the group to act each turn. If one decides to speak, all of them attempt to do so; if one throws a left hook, all of them choose this form of combat, ignoring any weapons they may have. Failure means the Gift has no effect, while a botch inadvertently links the character's mind with another individual for the remainder of the scene. (The Storyteller should decide whether the character becomes linked with a friend or an enemy.)

## Merits and Flaws Aetherial

These Merits and Flaws have to do with the Garou's ties to the Umbra in general or the Aetherial Realm in particular.

### *Celestial Guidance (1 point Merit)*

You are at home in the Aetherial Realm and can intuit the direction you need to go by a simple act of concentration. If you concentrate on your destination and make a successful Willpower roll (difficulty 6), you can sense the nearest appropriate "step" towards your destination, whether a moon path, anchorhead or even the realm of a potential guide. Even if an Umbral event throws you off course, you can eventually find your way back to familiar territory.

### *Celestial Sensitivity (2 point Merit)*

You are attuned to the Aetherial Realm, a condition which allows you to feel when something isn't right around you. This makes it easy for you to avoid being in the wrong place at the wrong time. The Storyteller determines when you receive warning, and whether or not you can determine whether the sense of wrongness comes from some sort of astrological phenomenon, celestial event or disturbance of the local spirits.

### *Umbral Vertigo (3 point Flaw)*

Being in the Umbra so distorts your perceptions that you cannot tell which way is "up" or "down." You constantly experience the sensation of falling. You perform all physical actions at a +2 difficulty while you are in the Umbra, including combat; furthermore, you must make a Willpower roll to avoid suffering the same penalty on Social and Mental rolls, due to your inability to concentrate completely on what you are doing.

## Zodiacal Merits and Flaws

The following Merits and Flaws come from the influence of the planetary Incarnae. Players who wish their characters to reflect the actions of one or more of the zodiacal patrons may purchase a maximum of seven points worth of Merits with freebie points or take up to seven points of Flaws in return for additional freebie points in character creation. Storytellers who agree to let their players incorporate these Merits and Flaws into existing characters may award up to four points to each character for the purchase of Merits or allow players to take up to four points of Merits balanced with four points of Flaws.



## Nerigal

### *Battle Prowess (3 point Merit)*

Combat with weapons comes naturally to you. Swords, knives, klaives, quarterstaves and various other implements of hand-to-hand warfare seem almost second nature. You enjoy an extra die on all Melee dice pools. Your expertise in hitting, however, does not extend to causing more damage; you roll the standard amount of dice for damage.

### *Reluctant Warrior (2 point Flaw)*

Despite your Garou nature, you loathe fighting and have to force yourself to enter battle. Once you have committed yourself to the fray, you do not have any trouble using all your abilities to their fullest; however, you never initiate combat of your own accord. This Flaw does not affect your ability to defend yourself when attacked.

**Also Appropriate:** Berserker, Overconfident

## Eshtarra

### *Eyes of Eshtarra (4 point Merit)*

You can use your Kailindo Skill to heighten your senses to their maximum, allowing you to feel, smell and hear where things and people are. If blinded or placed in a situation where you cannot see, you can use this ability to substitute for your lack of sight. Information comes to you in a manner similar to a bat's sonar. In order to take this merit you must have at least one level of Kailindo. This Merit negates penalties caused by blindness or darkness. You cannot take this Merit if you have the Blind Flaw.

### *Earthbound (3 point Flaw)*

You have an inherent need to feel something solid underfoot. You avoid traveling by airplane whenever possible, dislike water (even if you're able to swim) and otherwise do whatever you can to remain "on the ground." Even when you travel through the Umbra, this feeling of discomfort accompanies you. You are only at ease when you have actually arrived at some "solid" place in the Umbra. You must spend a point of Willpower in order to board a plane, use a Gift that allows flight or take some similar action that separates you from *terra firma*. You must also make a Willpower roll whenever you enter the Umbra to avoid having to suffer a +1 difficulty to all your actions while beyond the Gauntlet.

**Also Appropriate:** Jack-Of-All-Trades, Weak-Willed

## Mitanu

### *Mitanu's Tongue (2 point Merit)*

You have the ability to talk your way out of most things when dealing with reasoning creatures, including most spirits. You gain two extra dice on rolls involving Subterfuge (or

related Secondary Abilities) when attempting to evade the issue, avoid blame or otherwise escape an awkward situation.

### *Mitanu's Retrograde Curse (3 point Flaw)*

The planet Mercury's retrograde position at the time of your birth has inflicted you with a perpetual handicap in communication. People constantly misunderstand you, you habitually arrive late at meetings, letters you send get delayed, lost or misdelivered and other similar misfortunes beset you. You must spend a point of Willpower each time you need to make yourself understood clearly or make it to an appointment or meeting on time.

**Also Appropriate:** Curiosity, Speech Impediment, Lightning Calculator, Ambidextrous

## Sokhta

### *Inner Sight (2 point Merit)*

The solutions to puzzles and mysteries come to you with relative ease. You enjoy a good mystery and look forward to the opportunity to test your intuition against some of life's confusing situations. You gain two extra dice on all rolls involving Enigmas.

### *Sokhta's Minor Madness (2 point Flaw)*

Madness overcomes you from time to time, although for the most part you remain functional. Choose a Derangement for your character. Whenever the moon is in your auspice, you must roll your Willpower (difficulty 8) to avoid surrendering to your lunacy. You must make this roll every night the moon remains in your phase. At all other times of the month you function normally.

**Also Appropriate:** Deranged, Calm Heart, Moon-Bound

## Katanka-Sonnak

### *The Fire Within (2 point Merit)*

The fires of Katanka-Sonnak warm you from within, making you extra resilient against cold weather or damage caused by the cold. You gain two dice to Survival or other rolls involving cold weather hazards, such as swimming to shore in an icy river or digging your way out of an avalanche. You also take one less die damage from frostbite or other cold-related hazards.

### *Uncontrollable Appetite (2 point Flaw)*

You suffer from a tendency to binge whenever you are under stress or have gone without food for more than a few hours. Something in your metabolism snaps and you feel the need to eat enormous amounts of food — everything in sight

that is even vaguely edible. Such binges follow each frenzy or other stress-related event; additionally, whenever you go more than four hours without at least a snack of some sort, you feel the urge to devour great amounts of food at the next opportunity. You may spend a Willpower point to overcome this urge for a scene. At the end of each binge, you must roll Stamina + Survival (difficulty 7) or be violently ill for the next half-hour.

**Also Appropriate:** Driving Goal, Daredevil

## **Hakahe**

### ***Friend of Sorcery (5 point Merit)***

Magic fascinates you in all its forms. You make all Gift-related or Knowledge-related Occult rolls at -1 to your difficulty. In addition, you grasp the principles of Theurge Gifts more easily. Even if your auspice is something other than Theurge, you can learn the Gifts of the crescent moon at the same experience point cost as those of your own auspice. If you are a Theurge, you spend one less experience point to acquire a new Theurge Gift (although you must still abide by the restrictions of your Rank).

### ***Sadness of Hakahe (1 point Flaw)***

You tend to succumb to depression whenever circumstances overwhelm you. Instead of reaching inside to find that extra will to endure or persist, you flounder in the depths of self-pity and pessimism. If you fail three successive rolls (either in combat or non-combat situations) you fall prey to feelings of despair and inadequacy. All successive rolls have a +1 added to their difficulty until you finally succeed at something.

**Also Appropriate:** Charmed Existence, Low Self Image

## **Tambiyah**

### ***Mother's Insight (4 point Merit)***

You have an uncanny ability to see into the heart of a situation. You make all Wits-related rolls (with the exception of initiative rolls) at -1 to your difficulty. Additionally, in situations where three or more successes are required, you need one less success to accomplish your task. You cannot botch Wits-related rolls (again, excluding initiative rolls), although you can fail them.

### ***Incorrigible Flirt (2 point Flaw)***

You cannot resist making playful attempts at seducing anyone who fits your criteria for the perfect sexual partner. Although you may not intend to begin a serious relationship (or any relationship) with the object of your desire, you find yourself assuming the role of coquette or seducer, whichever seems more appropriate, whenever you are in the presence of someone who you consider attractive. You may find yourself flirting with more than one person at the same time, a situation that could turn awkward in a heartbeat. You must spend a point of Willpower to remain focused on the matter at hand and defer

your urges until a more appropriate time. Worse, your Willpower is considered to be one point lower whenever "potential mates" try to seduce you or bend your will with supernatural powers. Garou with this Flaw are almost certainly Enticer-bait, so don't assume it's all fun and games.

**Also Appropriate:** Animal Magnetism, Compulsion, True Love

## **Meros**

### ***Luck of the Road (2 point Merit)***

You enjoy traveling for its own sake and take any opportunity to do so. The road also seems to have an affinity for you and you find most journeys pleasurable experiences. You make any rolls involving travel-related actions at a -2 difficulty — including finding places to stay along your route, locating convenient short cuts and avoiding obstacles such as traffic tie-ups (in urban areas) or rockslides and flooded rivers (in the wilderness). Your affinity extends to your companions as well, giving them a -1 to similar rolls when traveling with you.

### ***Errant Mind (1 point Flaw)***

You have a deserved reputation for being unreliable. Your mind tends to wander frequently so that you forget meetings you promised to attend, fail to keep promises (although sworn oaths tend to stay in your memory) and otherwise fall short of the expectations of others. You must spend a Willpower point each time that you wish to make a determined effort to keep a promise or attend a gathering.

**Also Appropriate:** Jack-Of-All-Trades, Natural Linguist, Absent-Minded

## **Zarok**

### ***Born Leader (1 point Merit)***

Others respond to your inherent authority and tend to follow your orders or suggestions. Even if you do not hold a position of leadership, those around you treat you as if you did. You make all rolls involving the Leadership Talent at -1 to your difficulty.

### ***Braggart (2 point Flaw)***

Your favorite topic of conversation is yourself. You make every attempt to bring conversations around to your achievements and successes and you never fail to take credit for everything you even vaguely affected. You can't avoid reminding others of your deeds and exploits. Consequently, people tire of listening to you blow your own horn for more than a few minutes. You make all Social rolls at a penalty of +1 to your difficulty as a result of others' inattention and boredom with your self-aggrandizing speeches. (If you take this Flaw, you'll be expected to roleplay your sense of pride and overimportance.)

**Also Appropriate:** Overconfident, Concentration

## **Lu-Bat**

### ***Resigned Spirit (2 point Merit)***

You accept defeat and setbacks with a calmness uncommon in most Garou. Others find it difficult to provoke you to anger by taunts or insults and you do not get overly disappointed when you fail. You gain a +2 to your difficulty to frenzy from trivial matters such as personal frustration or the goading of others. When a true occasion for frenzy presents itself — such as the sight of a place ravaged by Wyrmtaint — your chance for frenzy is normal.

### ***Indolent Will (4 point Flaw)***

You have a hard time rousing yourself to take action. Whether others call it laziness or simply a tendency toward inertia, you prefer to sit back and let others take the initiative. Unless you spend a Willpower point to allow yourself a normal initiative roll, you automatically go last in any turn.

**Also Appropriate:** Calm Heart, Unskilled

## **Ruatma**

### ***Hidden Talent (3 point Merit)***

You have a knack for keeping secrets and for concealing objects so that others have a difficult time locating them. This makes you a natural recipient for sensitive information. Others have a +2 to their difficulty for attempting to overhear your private conversations. If you hide an object, others suffer a +2 to their difficulty to locate it.

### ***Intrigue Junkie (1 point Flaw)***

You can't resist the urge to complicate matters by inserting an element of intrigue in almost everything you do. Nothing for you is ever simple or straightforward. You assume that others have ulterior motives, just as you do. You must spend a Willpower point to resist your tendency to mistrust others or to avoid overcomplicating a simple situation.

### ***Suspicion Magnet (4 point Flaw)***

For some reason, others mistrust you and attribute all kinds of sinister motives to your every word and deed. Even your packmates refuse to believe that you can do anything without some sort of ulterior motive. You suffer a +2 difficulty to Social rolls, to reflect your problems convincing others of your sincerity or that you are speaking truthfully.

**Also Appropriate:** Dark Secret, Eidetic Memory

## **Shantar**

### ***Adaptable Nature (2 point Merit)***

You accept change easily and adapt quickly to unfamiliar situations or alien circumstances. The most bizarre Umbral landscapes do not phase you, nor does it bother you to make sudden changes in plans or battle tactics. You can

avoid any penalties associated with exposure to alien environments or drastic changes.

### ***Thoughtless Heart (2 point Flaw)***

You suffer from a lack of wisdom in your judgments and frequently take action without regard to the consequences for yourself or for others. You often say or do things that hurt others out of thoughtlessness, rather than from malice. You don't mean to harm anyone, you just don't take the time to consider the repercussions. You suffer +2 difficulty to Wits-related rolls (with the exception of initiative rolls).

**Also Appropriate:** Confused, Mechanical Aptitude

## **Rorg**

### ***Good Instincts (3 point Merit)***

You have an uncanny ability to intuit the best course of action in situations involving instinctive responses rather than logic or rational thought. This Merit makes you an ideal companion in the wilderness, where action takes precedence over thought. You make all rolls involving Primal Urge or Survival at -2 to your difficulty.

### ***Foul Temper (2 point Flaw)***

You suffer from perpetual anger, and this shows in your words and actions. You are quick to snap at packmates and lose your temper easily. Because you are so angry so often, you find it more difficult to accumulate Rage — anger is your normal state of being, and it's hard to focus your wrath into something more potent. Whenever you encounter a situation that would normally result in your gaining a point of Rage, you must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6) to do so.

**Also Appropriate:** Reputation (excellent packmate), Intolerance, Pack Mentality, Hatred

## **Planetary Aspects**

These Merits and Flaws first appeared in a slightly different form in the first edition Werewolf Players Guide. Players whose characters already possess these Merits and

### ***Eclipse-Born***

A solar or lunar eclipse during a Garou's birth is marked down as a definite omen. However, since childbirth typically lasts much longer than an eclipse's duration (save for lupus), there isn't any effect on the Garou's auspice. Anyone born during a lunar eclipse is treated as an Ahroun as usual (lunar eclipses take place only during the full moon). Even so, the effects of an eclipse on a Garou's birth are hard to argue. The best way to simulate the effects is with Merits and Flaws, usually supernatural in nature; what better way to rationalize your Metamorph ability, or what better forewarning of your character's eventual Dark Fate?



Flaws may continue to use them instead of the Zodiacal Merits and Flaws detailed above. While Storytellers may allow both Planetary and Zodiacal Merits and Flaws in their games, individual characters should only possess one or the other type. Storytellers may allow characters with Planetary Aspects to change those Merits for similar Zodiacal ones, either paying the difference in freebie points or gaining back freebie points to spend depending on the cost differential. In like fashion, characters may convert Planetary Aspect Flaws to Zodiacal Flaws (with the Storyteller's permission) so long as the total number of points gained remains the same.

Characters using Planetary Aspects may not possess two aspects belonging to the same planet. They may, however, choose two aspects of different planets. Having more than two Planetary Aspects is not recommended, except under certain circumstances (such as the presence of a planetary alignment at the moment of birth). Rising and Midsky aspects count as Merits and cost freebie points to acquire. Descending aspects are Flaws and give extra freebie points to characters who possess them. Unless the Storyteller decides differently, Descending Planetary Aspects count toward the total number of Flaws allowed in the process of character creation.

### ***Mercury Rising (3 point Merit)***

You will travel far, both in the physical realm and in your far-ranging thoughts. Physical barriers, societal limitations and constraints of all kinds cannot restrain you when you desire to escape their bounds. Ragabash Garou find their natural tendencies blossom with this aspect, while Silent Striders view it as a particularly good portent. Garou who have Mercury Rising have a -1 to any difficulty that involves the Gauntlet, from stepping sideways to using Gifts that require overcoming the Gauntlet.

### ***Mercury Midsky (2 point Merit)***

Teaching comes naturally to you; you draw on the vast experience and insights which evolve from Mercury's skill in communicating information. Occasionally, however, you find that your position as teacher interferes with other duties — such as fighting the Wyrms. You constantly juggle the two impulses. Philodox Garou consider this a favorable aspect, while Stargazers admire individuals with this aspect in their natal chart.

This Merit affects other Garou in addition to the individual who possesses it. Any Garou who studies with you gains two extra experience points per story in which they spend at least one scene under your tutelage. Each time you agree to teach a student, you gain one point of temporary Honor Renown. In order to qualify, however, you must possess the Instruction Skill or possess at least four dots in the Ability or Attribute you wish to teach. Beginning Stargazer characters gain two extra points of temporary Wisdom Renown if they possess this aspect.

### ***Mercury Descending (3 point Flaw)***

This unfavorable aspect causes you to have problems with limitations and boundaries due to the reversal of the qualities associated with Mercury. Communication difficulties that involve long distances or complex ideas also tend to go awry. You suffer a penalty of +1 to actions that involve the Gauntlet as well as to attempts to maneuver through bureaucratic red tape or bypass a locked door or security system. Rolls that involve Subterfuge also receive a +1 to their difficulty.

### ***Venus Rising (4 point Merit)***

You possess an unmistakable charisma that makes you a natural leader, inspiring others to follow you out of love and admiration rather than from fear and intimidation. Lovers come into your life with regularity and friends seek you out. The Children of Gaia treasure this aspect, seeing it as a means for bringing about their goal of universal harmony and peaceful coexistence. Social rolls that involve Charisma gain an extra die.

### ***Venus Midsky (3 point Merit)***

This aspect increases your ability to act as an intermediary or mediator between opposing factions. You possess a soothing voice and calming nature and can often stop hostilities from erupting. People enjoy listening to you and, therefore, tend to listen harder to what you say.

When acting as a mediator, you gain 3 extra Willpower points for the duration of that scene. However, this aspect also places a limit on your Rage. You cannot spend Rage points while in the process of mediation; furthermore, it requires five successes on a Rage roll for you to frenzy when acting as an intermediary. Each time you successfully mediate a situation that could otherwise have become violent or hostile, you receive 3 temporary points of Wisdom Renown.

### ***Venus Descending (2 point Flaw)***

Love defeats you constantly. In addition, people tend to discount what you say for no apparent reason. Bone Gnawers see this aspect as a test of one's ability to survive despite unfavorable circumstances and respect anyone who possesses Venus Descending (though they don't necessarily listen to that individual).

Any Social rolls that involve Charisma or Seduction are at +1 difficulty for you. Bone Gnawers with Venus Descending, however, receive two extra points in temporary Honor Renown (a one-time bonus given at the time of character creation or when the Flaw is first acquired).

### ***Mars Rising (6 point Merit)***

The fire of battle runs through your veins and communicates itself through every aspect of your being. Your eyes gleam with the eagle's ferocity, while your posture demonstrates your constant readiness for combat. The Get of Fenris celebrate the birth of any tribe member born with Mars

Rising — particularly Ahroun, Galliard or Philodox. You gain an extra die to your dice pool for any offensive combat action; you may add this bonus to either your attack or damage roll each turn. This bonus does not apply to defensive actions or to soak rolls.

### ***Mars Midsky (5 point Merit)***

You have a reputation for your volatile temper and inspire awe in others for the destruction caused by your memorable frenzies. Most Garou consider this tendency a Merit rather than a Flaw, since a healthy Berserk frenzy can act as a powerful aid in battles against overwhelming odds. Furthermore, Garou tend to respect and fear warriors famous for their spectacular frenzies. Fianna Ahrouns particularly value this planetary aspect, since it calls to mind the deeds of many legendary Celtic and Fianna heroes.

You never enter a Fox frenzy; instead you follow the path of the Berserk. When in a state of frenzy, you receive +2 dice to any soak rolls and add +1 to your dice pool for any Strength-related rolls. Ahroun receive three additional points of temporary Glory Renown due to a reputation as an all-out, no-holds-barred fighter. However, there is a downside; you frenzy with only two successes on a Rage roll, meaning that the Thrall of the Wyrms looms much closer to you than to others.

### ***Mars Descending (6 point Flaw)***

Your inner anger overwhelms you to the point of inarticulateness and incapacity. Despite your potential as a warrior, you just can't seem to put it all together at the right time due to your run-away passions.

Your dice pool for combat-related actions is reduced by one. In addition, you can only spend up to two Rage points per turn, regardless of your Dexterity.

### ***Jupiter Rising (7 point Merit)***

Luck favors you with extraordinary good fortune. When you seem to need it most, good luck falls in your path. This happens most often when you attempt to aid someone other than yourself, but you also enjoy the benefits of this aspect.

If you wish to invoke the luck of your aspect, you must spend two Gnosis points and make a Gnosis roll, difficulty 9. The number of successes equals your total "luck points" for the scene. You may spend these points in several ways:

- You can use one point to heal one health level (even one lost to aggravated damage).
- You can use them as Willpower or Rage points.
- You can use them to re-roll any 1's on a one-for-one basis.

You may only invoke this Merit once per scene. If you run out of Gnosis, you have temporarily run out of luck.

### ***Jupiter Midsky (4 point Merit)***

You absorb knowledge easily and enjoy a reputation as a scholar (though not as a teacher). You tend to possess a breadth of knowledge that makes others seek you out for

counsel. You may add one die to your dice pool for any Knowledge Ability roll.

### ***Jupiter Descending (6 point Flaw)***

Murphy's law seems to rule your life. Jupiter's lucky influences reverse themselves in your horoscope, causing bad luck to plague you constantly. Fortunately, your bad luck does not bleed over into the lives and fortunes of others. This frequently causes you to resent their comparative good fortune.

Each time you make a roll, the Storyteller rolls an additional die. If that die is a one, it takes away one of your successes; otherwise, it has no effect on your roll.

## ***Celestial Fetishes & Talens***

The fetishes described here can only be obtained through interaction with the planetary Incarnae or one of their lesser spirits or spirit servants. Characters cannot make these fetishes themselves. Most of them are rare, appearing only in the hands of those individuals who have done something to deserve receiving a gift from one of the planetary Incarnae. Storytellers should feel free to design other fetishes that come from the Aetherial Realm.

### ***Hunter's Talons***

Level 3, Gnosis 6

Made from chunks of an asteroid from Rorg's domain, these metal talons can be laid atop a Garou's own claws, like some sort of clawed gauntlet. Their damage is that of a standard claw attack, but by activating the fetish, the Garou can double his damage dice pool against Wyrms creatures. Needless to say, a Garou using these talons usually places the fetish on her dominant hand (these fetishes do not come in pairs). The damage is, of course, aggravated. A spirit of the hunt is bound into each fetish.

### ***Ruatma's Cup***

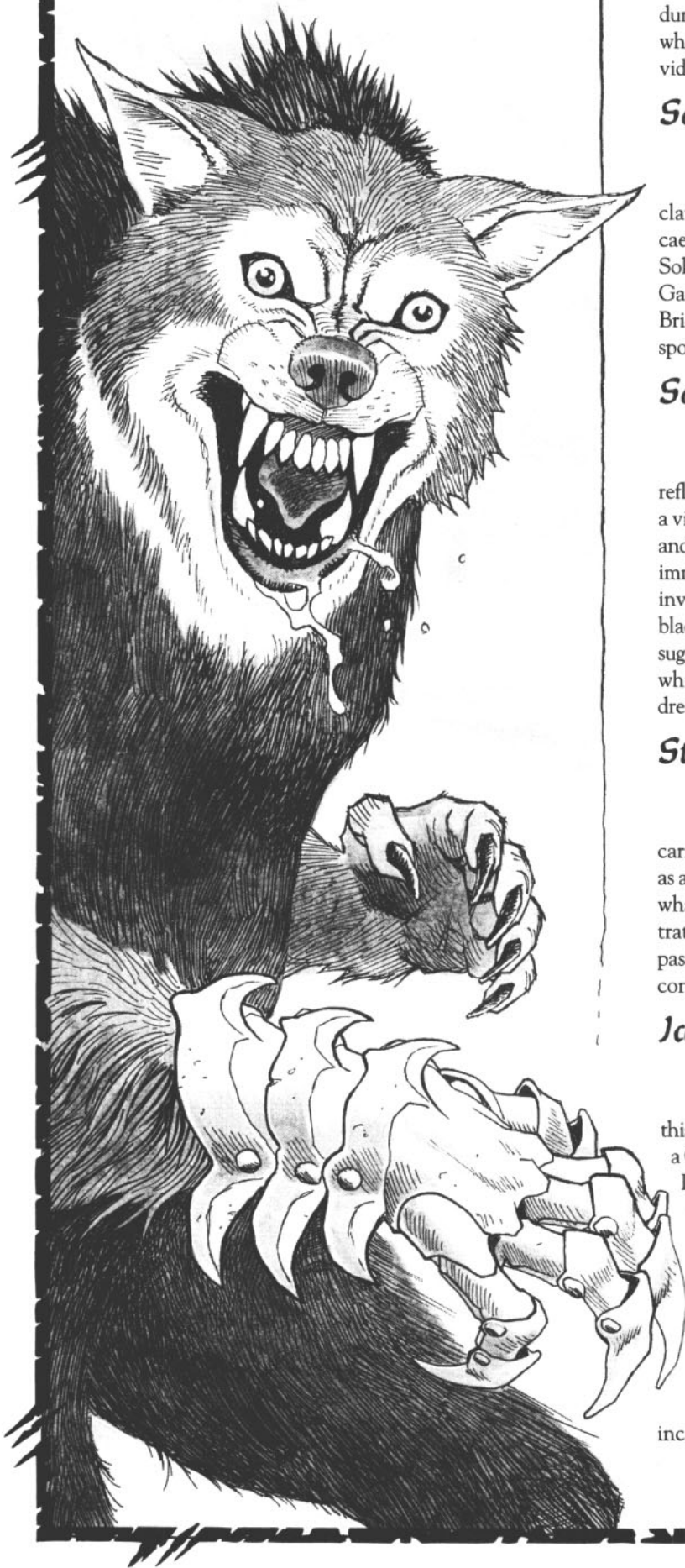
Level 3, Gnosis 5

This pewter drinking cup, when activated, inspires anyone who drinks from it to regard the cup's owner as a confidant and close friend. The drinker receives a subconscious Willpower roll, difficulty 9, to resist the effects, but will not realize that he is potentially being manipulated. The effect is so subtle that the victim doesn't realize what has happened, even after the effect has worn off.

### ***Maidenstone***

Level 3, Gnosis 6

A female Garou who possesses one of these small, flat stones can control her reproductive cycles to the extent that she can decide whether or not to become pregnant. A male Garou who has a Maidenstone can likewise decide whether or not to father a child. Unfortunately, the odds of siring or birthing Garou children aren't affected. The Maidenstone



eases childbirth for the possessor or for an individual designated by the possessor (who must lend the fetish to her for the duration of labor). This fetish glows with a steady warmth whenever the possessor comes into contact with an individual whose destiny is linked to the Maidenstone's holder.

### *Sokhta's Pathstone*

Level 3, Gnosis 6

This small flat stone resembles a pearl and has a wolf's claw imprinted on one side. Most Pathstones remain in the caern where they are used to form one end of a Moon Bridge. Sokhta's Pathstones, however, can be carried about by a Garou and can, therefore, allow the formation of a Moon Bridge from wherever the carrier happens to be to another spot that has a Pathstone attuned to it.

### *Songstone of Eshtarra*

Level 4, Gnosis 7

This small, rounded stone contains flakes of mica that reflect the moonlight. When activated, the Songstone grants a vision to the one who uses it. The vision, though not exact and frequently couched in symbols, gives a hint about the immediate future (within 24 hours). For example, the Garou invoking the power of the Songstone may see a misshapen black bird swoop down upon a sleeping wolf. This might suggest the possibility of a surprise attack upon a nearby caern while most of its members are sleeping. A spirit of time or dreams is generally bound into one of these fetishes.

### *Star Compass*

Level 4, Gnosis 7

This device appears to be an ordinary compass. When carried into the Umbra and activated, however, it functions as a directional device that unerringly leads the possessor to whatever realm she desires. The Garou need only concentrate on her intended destination while holding the Compass. This fetish comes from Meros' wandering realm and contains one of that Incarna's lesser spirits.

### *Ice Klaive*

Level 5, Gnosis 7

Although this weapon is no bigger than a standard klaive, this silver ritual dagger causes aggravated damage equivalent to a Grand Klaive (Strength + 4). The difficulty to hit with an Ice Klaive is 6. In addition, when activated, the extreme cold of the Ice Klaive causes an additional health level of non-aggravated damage equivalent to frostbite. This fetish-weapon comes from Nerigal's cold domain and contains one of his warrior spirits.

### *Zarok's Spirit Crown*

Level 5, Gnosis 7

This simple metal band, when activated and worn, increases the wearer's Charisma with regard to Umbral



## Moonsilver

This silvery substance, available only from Sokhta or some other Incarna of Luna, originates in the Aetherial Realm that corresponds to the moon. Objects dipped in melted Moonsilver do twice the number of aggravated wounds to Garou or other silver-vulnerable creatures that an object of plain silver does (although a mere coating will soon flake away like a coat of paint). In addition, Moonsilver objects increase their possessor's Gnosis by one—although if the wielder carelessly comes into contact with the naked Moonsilver of his own fetish, he isn't shielded from the damage. Garou may obtain Moonsilver from Sokhta through performing a quest for her, although they must sacrifice a point of permanent Gnosis to her as payment.

spirits by two extra dice. Spirits respond favorably to the Garou and assist her in any way possible, including fighting for her or seeking out information from other spirits. If the Crown is worn for more than one scene, the Garou suffers a blinding headache that continues to escalate until she removes the Crown for at least 48 hours. A minor spirit of Zarok is bound into this fetish.

## Moonsilver Klaive

Level 6, Gnosis 7

This ritual dagger, unlike other Klaives, bears a permanent coating of Moonsilver. Thus, a Garou who carries this dagger loses no Gnosis from the underlying silver of the klaive. Instead, the Garou functions as if his Gnosis were one point higher due to the Moonsilver. The dagger houses a spirit of war or protection and does double damage dice against silver-vulnerable opponents. The difficulty to attack with a Moonsilver Klaive is 6. Garou and other creatures intolerant of silver may not soak the damage from this weapon. This fetish comes from Sokhta's Realm and can only be obtained from her or one of her spirits, although it is possible for a Garou to obtain Moonsilver and dip her own klaive in the substance.

## Talens

These talens provide examples of the kinds of items found in the Aetherial homes of the Planetary Incarnae. Unlike other talens, these are not created by Garou, but carried back from Umbral quests. The Storyteller should feel free to create other similar items.

### Blood Ice

Gnosis 5

This reddish knife-like shard of ice remains solid and sharp as long as it remains sheathed. When drawn to use for a weapon, it causes aggravated damage—but also begins to deteriorate. The first time it strikes an opponent, the Blood Ice does Strength + 3 damage. The next successful attack

does Strength + 2; the third and final attack does Strength +1. After that the Blood Ice "melts" and becomes useless. This talen originates in Nerigal's realm.

## Eshtarra's Flowers

Gnosis 7

These tiny blossoms, when cast upon the ground, summon a member of Eshtarra's pack to help fight for the summoner or defend a certain place. The spirit wolves enjoy the advantage of being able to fight both on the material plane and in the Umbra. The materialized spirit fights until its body is "killed" (in the physical world) or else its Power is drained (in the Umbra). Each flower may be used only once.

## Meros' Winged Scarab

Gnosis 6

This tiny jewel is shaped like an Egyptian scarab. The Garou can activate the talen so that it becomes a tiny insect which can either scout ahead for the Garou, or else serve as a distraction for its master's enemies or pursuers. In either case, the Scarab vanishes after it has completed its task. This talen comes from Meros' realm.

## Mercurial Powder

Gnosis 4

This silvery powder, when placed on the tip of the tongue, temporarily increases a character's Wits by 2 dice (even if this exceeds five dice). This increases the user's reaction time and any other Wits-related activity for one scene. This ashen dust comes from the realm of Mitanu, and is granted only to those who've successfully quested there.

## Rings of Lu-Bat

Gnosis 5

This dust, when blown or sprinkled on its target, forms a ring that tightens and holds the victim motionless. Anyone caught in the ring must answer a single question truthfully. Once the victim has given a true answer, the ring dissipates. The ring has a Strength of 8 for purposes of breaking free from its grasp. The dust originates in Lu-Bat's realm.

## Spirit Wolves (Eshtarra's Pack)

**Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Perception 2

**Abilities:** Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Primal-Urge 2, Stealth 2, Survival 4

**Physical attacks:** Bite, Overbear, Body Slam, Leaping Rake  
When attacking in their normal spirit form, the Spirit Wolves have the following attributes and abilities:

Rage 9, Willpower 10, Gnosis 7, Power 40

**Charms:** Airt Sense, Reform, Blast Flame (3 dice of aggravated damage)

## *Shantar's Waters of Thought*

Gnosis 5

This clear liquid, when imbibed, increases the drinker's Intelligence by 2 dice for a single scene. This enables the person who partakes of the Waters to come up with some important insight or solve some puzzle that might otherwise elude her. Shantar's watery realm supplies this talen.

## *Sunfire*

Gnosis 6

Carried by necessity within a darkened sphere, this blazing molten liquid can burn out sickness or heal injury. When applied to a wound or swallowed, Sunfire causes intense agony from its great heat (often resulting in temporary unconsciousness). Even so, the liquid cures up to three health levels of aggravated damage, and also purges diseases, poisons or Wyrn-taint from the bodies of its victims. This liquid comes from Katanka-Sonnak's domain; it's rumored that immersion in Sunfire might even cure fomori of their state, if they could be taken to the realm for a cure.

## *Tambiyah's Seeds*

Gnosis 7

These small seeds, when tossed upon a piece of damaged ground, begin a healing process that repairs damage to the earth over an extended period of time. Each seed affects a square mile of ground and serves to purify the land from Wyrn-taint, toxic waste or the effects of strip-mining or some other form of non-natural corruption. The seeds come from Tambiyah's Aetherial home.

## *Born Under a Bad Sign*

Garou astrologers do not yet know the implications for individuals born "under the Eye of the Wyrn." From the bits and pieces of knowledge gathered from the observations made by the Sept of the Stars from their spirit orrery, the effects of Anthelios remain unclear. The prophecies that seem to refer to the new star bode only ill for the Garou and—presumably—for any individuals born with Anthelios as a major factor in their horoscope. While no specific Merits or Flaws exist, the stigma of having Anthelios as a prominent influence in a Garou's astrological chart does not bode well for the individual involved. Storytellers may want to play up this negative aspect for characters who fall into this category, although it's not likely to be a major factor unless the Storyteller chooses to advance the storyline sufficiently into the future that certain Anthelios-born Garou are nearing their First Change.

## *Vulcan's Embers*

Gnosis 5

This glowing ember may be used to forge or destroy a single weapon or can be hurled at an opponent. Weapons created using one of Vulcan's Embers add an additional die to damage pools, while weapons thrown in a fire containing one of these talens are reduced in one turn to useless slag. If used as a weapon, an Ember inflicts three Health Levels of napalm-like aggravated damage before dying. These Embers originate in Hakahe's fiery realm.

# Appendix: Those Who Walk Among the Stars

Details on people and beings the characters may meet in the course of the chronicle are given here. Those profiled include members of the Sept of the Stars, leaders of the various factions involved with the birth of the metis cub and the spirits associated with the various planetary Incarnae. Storytellers should feel free to elaborate on or alter any of those given here to customize them for their own chronicles. Abilities and Gifts are taken from *Werewolf: the Apocalypse*, *Werewolf Players Guide*, *Book of the Wyrms* and Chapter Five of this book.

## *The Sept of the Stars*

Although their long exposure to the Umbra in general and the Aetherial Realm in particular has caused the members of the Sept of the Stars to assume the substance (or lack thereof) of spirits, they are shown here with the Attributes they possessed in physical form.

### *Altair*

**Breed:** Homid  
**Auspice:** Ahroun  
**Tribe:** Stargazer  
**Nature:** Visionary

**Demeanor:** Confidant

**Physical:** Strength 4 (6/8/7/5), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 5 (7/8/8/7)

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 4 (3/1/1/1), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2)

**Mental:** Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

**Talents:** Alertness 4, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Empathy 3, Expression 1, Instruction 3, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 2, Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Animal Ken 1, Kailindo 5, Meditation 4, Leadership 5, Melee 3, Performance 2, Stealth 1, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Area Knowledge (Aetherial Realm) 4, Enigmas 5, Garou Astrology 5, Linguistics 2, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Rituals 3, Wyrms Lore 2

**Backgrounds:** Past Life 2

**Gifts:** (1) Aura of Leadership, Balance, Battlesense, The Falling Touch, Luminous Sight, Sense Wyrms; (2) Inner Strength, Shards of Icy Rage, Staredown; (3) Clarity, Merciful Blow, Nerigal's Call to Arms, Ride the Solar Winds, Whispering Wind; (4) Body Shift, Challenge of Single Combat, Preternatural Awareness, Questioning, Spirit Ward; (5) Astral Mind, Directing the Soul, Essential Transformation, Heart of the Warrior, Kiss of Helios, Moondream, Savagery of the Taloned Hunter





Rage 7, Gnosis 10, Willpower 10

**Rank:** 5

**Rites:** Storyteller's discretion; presumably a great many

**Fetishes:** Moonsilver Klaive, Phoebe's Veil, Harmony Flute

**Image:** Altair's Homid form is that of a man of indeterminate age between 30 and 50 in superior physical condition. In Crinos, Altair has a black coat streaked with gray fur that forms a pattern like the stars seen against a dark night sky. His Lupus form has the same black and gray fur and is larger than the average wolf. He has unnaturally bright eyes in all forms.

**Roleplaying Notes:** Altair is secure and confident in his own wisdom and abilities. He acts like the quiet calm sensei of many martial arts movies, instantly assessing situations and saying much with few words.

**History:** Altair keeps his past to himself. Since his First Change he has aspired to gain as much knowledge of the stars as possible — an unusual goal for a born warrior. The founding of the Sept of the Stars gave him the perfect opportunity to fulfill his dream. Before joining the sept, his mastery of Kailindo led to his reputation for being largely made of spirit stuff. He encouraged that rumor so that many who would oppose him ended up reconsidering the wisdom of their decision. He has now spent most of his life as a Garou in the Umbra, and shows no regret for leaving the physical realm behind.

## *Rigel Walks-the-Stars*

**Breed:** Homid

**Auspice:** Philodox

**Tribe:** Stargazer (formerly Child of Gaia)

**Nature:** Judge

**Demeanor:** Caregiver

**Physical:** Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 4 (6/7/7/6)

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3)

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urge 3

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 3, Kailindo 1, Leadership 2, Melee 3, Performance 1, Stealth 2, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Area Knowledge (Aetherial Realm) 3, Astrology 5, Enigmas 4, Garou Astrology 5, Investigation 2, Linguistics 3, Medicine 2, Occult 4, Rituals 4, Science (Astronomy) 3

**Backgrounds:** Mentor (Bright Vision) 3

**Gifts:** (1) Mother's Touch, Persuasion, Resist Pain, Truth of Gaia; (2) Call to Duty, Inner Strength, Strength of Purpose, Surface Attunement; (3) Merciful Blow, Wisdom of the Ancient Ways

Rage 6, Gnosis 8, Willpower 8

**Rank:** 3

**Rites:** (Accord) Rite of Cleansing, Rite of Contrition, Rite of Renunciation; (Mystic) Rite of Talisman Dedication, Rite of Becoming, Rite of Summoning; (Punishment) Rite of Ostracism, Stone of Scorn, Voice of the Jackal; (Minor) Greet the Moon, Greet the Sun

**Fetishes:** Songstone of Eshtarra

**Image:** In Homid form, Rigel appears as a mature woman in her mid-thirties, with shoulder-length brown hair (streaked with silver at the temples); she dresses in long skirts and loose blouses whenever possible. In Crinos form, her brown fur is slashed with silver. As a wolf, Rigel is an average-sized brown and silver wolf with smiling eyes.

**Roleplaying Notes:** You enjoy instructing others, particularly in your special field of Garou astrology. You brook no nonsense, however, and assert your authority with a combination of gentle persuasion and sharp-tongued sarcasm.

**History:** Originally a member of the Children of Gaia, Rigel found that she had more in common with the Stargazers whom she met at intertribal moots. As she grew more involved in studying the cosmos and the effects of the stars on the lives of both humans and Garou, she realized that she could better serve Gaia by linking her fate to that of the Stargazers. Fortunately, her desire met with the approval of a Stargazer elder, who introduced her to the Sept of the Stars. Rigel quickly made a place for herself among those cosmic contemplatives and now serves as a greeter and advisor to visitors to the sept.

### *Bright Vision (Andromeda Moon-sister)*

**Breed:** Homid

**Auspice:** Philodox

**Tribe:** Stargazer

**Nature:** Visionary

**Demeanor:** Explorer

**Physical:** Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5)

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3)

**Mental:** Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 4, Expression 4, Instruction 4, Primal-Urge 3, Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Etiquette 4, Kailindo 5, Leadership 2, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Astronomy 4, Enigmas 4, Garou Astrology 4, Investigation 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 3, Rituals 4, Science (Planetology) 4

**Backgrounds:** Rites 4

**Gifts:** (1) Persuasion, Scent of the True Form, Sense Wyrms, Speed of the Messenger, Truth of Gaia; (2) Call to Duty, Mantle of the land, Shorten the Road, Surface Attunement;

(3) Prophetic Vision, Unravel, Wisdom of the Ancients; (4) Preternatural Awareness, Scent of Beyond, Spirit Ward  
Rage 4, Gnosis 9, Willpower 7

**Rank:** 4

**Rites:** Storyteller should determine which rites are appropriate, but she definitely has the Rite of the Spirit Pass.

**Fetishes:** Star Compass

**Merit:** Eyes of Eshtarra

**Image:** In Homid form, Bright Vision appears as a woman in her mid-thirties, with auburn hair and very clear green eyes. From her unfocused gaze, it is readily apparent that she is blind. In Crinos form, her fur is a light grayish color, while her eyes retain their clear green. In Lupus, her fur remains gray, her eyes green, an odd color for a wolf.

**Roleplaying Notes:** You lost your sight to the Wyrms but have never given up on your vision of restoring the world to the harmony you've found within the Aetherial Realm. You enjoy visiting both new places and familiar haunts, especially when you can guide others to a similar enjoyment. Along the way, you hope to learn more to bring your vision to fruition.

**History:** Andromeda Moon-sister was once an ambitious young Garou who hoped to become the chief Philodox of her sept in rural Pennsylvania. Given to prophetic dreams, she foresaw herself traveling throughout the realms of the planetary Incarnae with a mixed group of explorers. Just as they finished their grand tour, she had another dream — that there would be an attack on the Sept of the Stars by a hoard of Black Spiral Dancers and corrupted Star-spirits. In the dream, she saw herself traveling to the sept to warn them and fighting alongside them to turn back their attackers. She also foresaw that if she did this, she would emerge from the battle blind. She decided the sacrifice was worth it. The dream was a true one, and the sept was saved. For her bravery and sacrifice, she was granted the ability to use her Kailindo skills to “see” in other ways and to teach others her skills. Her prophetic gifts have grown even stronger with the loss of her sight and she was invited to join the Sept of the Stars. To reflect the changes she had experienced and her new way of seeing, she took the name Bright Vision. She has been with the Sept of the Stars ever since, guiding other Garou on their journeys through the Aetherial Realm.

### *Antares Bitter-Truth*

**Breed:** Homid

**Auspice:** Ahroun

**Tribe:** Stargazer

**Nature:** Judge

**Demeanor:** Curmudgeon

**Physical:** Strength 4 (6/8/7/5), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 4 (6/7/7/6)

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3)

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 2, Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Animal Ken 1, Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Kailindo 3, Leadership 2, Melee 3, Stealth 3, Survival 4

**Knowledges:** Astronomy 3, Enigmas 2, Garou Astrology 3, Law 2, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Rituals 3

**Backgrounds:** Mentor (Altair) 5

**Gifts:** (1) Balance, Battlesense, Lambent Sight, Persuasion, Razor Claws; (2) Inner Strength, Shards of Icy Rage, Spirit of the Fray, Staredown; (3) Heart of Fury, Merciful Blow, Ride the Solar Winds; (4) Cocoon, Hunter's Horn, Preternatural Awareness

Rage 6, Gnosis 7, Willpower 8

**Rank:** 4

**Rites:** As chosen by the Storyteller

**Fetishes:** Ice Klaive

**Image:** Antares is in his late twenties. In Homid form he has a lean, muscular body, shoulder-length black hair, deep brown eyes and a scar over his left eyebrow. He prefers dark clothing that makes him seem more authoritative than his years. In Crinos, Antares is a ten-foot brute with black fur tipped with silvery gray. In wolf and Hispo form, his coloration is much the same. In all these forms, his scar stands out like a white brand.

**Roleplaying Notes:** You are actually quite young for such a highly ranked Garou. As Altair's protégé, you expect someday to take over the leadership of the Sept of the Stars. You know that the sept's most trying times are just ahead and want to perfect yourself as far as possible to meet whatever crisis comes. You much admire Altair and would not want to let him down. More than that, you're tired of hearing that the contemplative Stargazers cannot fight their own battles; you're living proof that isn't so.

**History:** Born of a Garou mother who often visited the Sept of the Stars and a Kinfolk amateur astronomer, Antares grew up fascinated by the stars and planets. His first ambition — to become an astronaut — proved impossible when he underwent his First Change. Soon thereafter, however, his mother took him to the Sept of the Stars and introduced him to Altair. The leader of the sept insisted that the young Garou undergo his Rite of Passage and learn what it meant to be Garou in the earthly realm, but promised that once the young Garou was blooded, he would accept him as his protégé. During his first battle, Antares was wounded. He arrived on the doorstep of the spirit orrery the next day, proudly displaying his battle scar and has been there ever since.

## *Canopus Skydancer*

**Breed:** Metis

**Auspice:** Galliard

**Tribe:** Stargazer

**Nature:** Builder

**Demeanor:** Caregiver

**Physical:** Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 5 (5/6/7/7), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5)

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 4 (3/0/0/0), Appearance 4 (3/0/4/4)

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

**Talents:** Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 4, Expression 4, Primal-Urge 3, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Drive 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Melee 3, Performance 4, Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Computer 1, Enigmas 2, Linguistics 1, Medicine 2, Rituals 4

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 2, Past Life 2, Rites 1

**Gifts:** (1) Balance, Call of the Wyld, Find the Child Within, Mindspeak, Sense Wyrm (2) Dreampeak, Eyes of the Cat, Oaksong, Peace of the Counselor (3) Deliberate Misinformation, Moonriver, Song of Rage (4) Bridge Walker, Mercurial Messenger

Rage 5, Gnosis 8, Willpower 7

**Rank:** 4

**Rites:** As needed

**Fetishes:** Ruatma's Cup

**Metis Deformity:** Canopus' left hand appears normal but does not function; he cannot close it into a fist or hold anything with it. In Lupus form, he has a pronounced limp, since his left foreleg does not support his full weight.

**Image:** Canopus is in his early thirties, though he looks more as if he had just turned twenty. In Homid form, he has coffee-black skin, curly black hair and brown eyes. He is whipcord-thin and moves with the agility of the born street kid. In Crinos, he has black fur and appears slightly undersized. In Lupus form, his fur is black, his eyes a glittering brown and he is almost gaunt-looking.

**Roleplaying Notes:** You have had a strange life. Only recently have you truly accepted and embraced what you are and dedicated yourself to Gaia's protection and the betterment of your sept. Because of your early life, you came late to your heritage, but you've made up for lost time, becoming powerful and earning Renown quite quickly. Though you understand that not all septs would have condemned your parents, you feel most comfortable among the Sept of the Stars. Here, you'll make your stand for better or for worse. If the Red Star bodes evil, you'll do what you can to stop it. As for the metis-born child, you can certainly empathize and will do all in your power to nurture it. If you can make it as a true Garou, so can it.

**History:** Canopus grew up hidden away in an attic. He never really understood why his parents found it necessary to keep him a secret and why they were always looking over their shoulders to see if anyone was after them. As he grew older, they explained things to him and he finally realized they were outcasts, afraid they'd be hunted down for their sin. After his First Change, he preferred to live as a street kid rather than approaching a sept and asking admittance. One day he returned home to find his parents both torn in tiny pieces and



he learned what Black Spiral Dancers were. Fighting wildly, he was captured by the corrupted ones, who began to spirit him away. He howled out his anguish and suddenly the attic was full of Garou. They overcame the Spirals and rescued Canopus. Briefly, he stayed with his rescuers, a sept of Glass Walkers who had been watching his parents for years, but he felt uncomfortable with them. Finally, he had a Theurge cast his horoscope for him and was told he belonged with the Sept of the Stars to record the unprecedented events that were soon to come. Accordingly, he traveled to the orrery and petitioned for admittance. After consulting their own oracles, they accepted him. Since then, Canopus has studied and learned as quickly as possible to be ready for the role the stars have decreed for him.

## **Sirius Darkstar**

**Breed:** Lupus

**Auspice:** Theurge

**Tribe:** Stargazer (formerly Uktena)

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Confidant

**Physical:** Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6)  
Stamina 5 (7/8/8/7)

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 4 (3/1/1/1), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2)

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

**Talents:** Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 4, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Animal Ken 4, Etiquette (Umbral) 4, Stealth 4

**Knowledges:** Cosmology 4, Enigmas 5, Occult 3, Rituals 5, Wyrms Lore 3

**Backgrounds:** Past Life 2, Pure Breed 3

**Gifts:** (1) Balance, Earthsense, Heightened Senses, Lamented Sight, Mother's Touch, Sense Magic, Sense Wyrms, Shroud, Spirit Speech; (2) Command Spirit, Hidden Depths, Moonpool of Sokhta, Name the Spirit, Sense the Unnatural, Spirit of the Bird, Umbral Tether; (3) Clarity, Exorcism, Hidden Heart, Prophetic Vision, Pulse of the Invisible, Sight from Beyond, Spirit Path; (4) Diplomatic Immunity, Gnaw, Grasp the Beyond, Spirit Drain; (5) Elemental Gift, Essential Transformation, The Malleable Spirit, Moondream, Wisdom of the Seer

Rage 6, Gnosis 9, Willpower 8

**Rank:** 5

**Rites:** Any appropriate.

**Fetishes:** Zarok's Spirit Crown

**Image:** Sirius looks as though he is easily sixty; in fact, he's closer to eighty. In Homid form, he looks like an old Native American with long, graying black hair, a prominent nose, high cheekbones and black eyes under gray brows. In Crinos, he is somewhat small and wiry, with dark fur tinged with red. He is beginning to gray in this form too. As a Lupus,

he is small, with red-tipped black fur and gray streaks around his muzzle and on his back.

**Roleplaying Notes:** You have lived long and seen much. Though you began life as a wolf, you soon realized the power within you and learned man's ways so you could tap into that power. Though you have never lost the Uktena passion for learning secrets, you have learned to put that to the service of the Sept of the Stars. With the advent of the Red Star and the birth of the metis cub, you believe you have found the reason for your long life. You will use the knowledge and skills you have acquired to turn whatever comes to the service of Gaia and to protect the Aetherial Realm as well as you can.

**History:** Born as a wolf in New Mexico, Sirius drifted to his father's people after his First Change. He joined the Sept of the Ghosts, a small group of Uktena desperately clinging to the one caern they still controlled, and learned his early lessons among these bitter Garou. Soon, he showed his promise as a Theurge and began walking the spirit world almost as frequently as the earthly realm. He met and fell in love with an Uktena Kinfolk woman and settled with her to raise a family. Constantly called upon to perform rites and help to bind Banes, he necessarily left his wife and two children home quite often. After tangling with a group of land speculators who attempted to cheat the native tribes out of their holdings, he returned home late one night to find that his wife and children had been murdered. Tracking the killers back to their land office, he assumed Crinos form and avenged his family. He let his sept know he was leaving and fled into the Umbra where he spent years moving from one realm to another trying to find surcease. Finally, he stumbled upon the Sept of the Stars, who adopted him. He has found a purpose with the Stargazers, becoming stronger even as he ages and awaiting the coming of foretold events he has seen in his dreams.

## **Other Important Figures**

These are the personalities appearing in Anthelios Raging and a brief entry for Star-spirits.

### **Vasile Talon-of-Judgment, Protector of Gaia**

**Breed:** Homid

**Auspice:** Philodox

**Tribe:** Shadow Lord

**Nature:** Director

**Demeanor:** Judge

**Physical:** Strength 4 (6/8/7/5), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5)

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 5 (4/2/2/2), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3)

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Expression 4, Intimidation 4, Primal-Urge 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 5

**Skills:** Drive 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Leadership 4, Melee 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Enigmas 3, Investigation 4, Law (the Litany) 4, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 4, Rituals 4

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 3, Resources 4

**Gifts:** (1) Aura of Confidence, Fatal Flaw, Persuasion, Resist Form, Scent of the True Form, Smell of Man, Truth of Gaia; (2) Call to Duty, Clap of Thunder, Luna's Armor, Sense of Purpose, Staredown; (3) Disquiet, Icy Chill of Despair, Paralyzing Stare, Weak Arm, Wisdom of the Ancient Ways; (4) Roll Over, Spirit Ward, Strength of the Dominator; (5) Assimilation, Geas, Obedience  
Rage 6, Gnosis 9, Willpower 8

**Rank:** 5

**Rites:** (Accord) Rite of Cleansing, Rite of Contrition; (Caern) Rite of the Opened Bridge; (Death) Rite of the Winter Wolf; (Mystic) Rite of Binding, Rite of the Questing Stone, Rite of Talisman Dedication, Rite of Summoning; (Punishment) Rite of Ostracism; Stone of Scorn; Voice of the Jackal; The Hunt; other rites as necessary

**Fetishes:** Cloak of Darkness

**Image:** In Homid form, Vasile appears as a stern man in his early 40s, with dark brown hair turning to silver at the temples and a receding hairline. His deep blue eyes hold no trace of pity, but regard others with an implacable and relentlessly calculating gaze. He dresses in tailored suits when conducting affairs in urban areas. In the wilderness he wears sturdy gear and occasionally dons combat fatigues or dresses in black stealth gear. His Crinos form is that of a dark brown, muscular creature with only the faintest touch of gray. As a wolf, Vasile is compact and muscular with dark brown fur shading to gray at the tips.

**Roleplaying Notes:** You serve the Litany, even before you serve Gaia. You believe that the Garou themselves are to blame for the terrible state of the world because they have fallen away from the precepts of their own laws. You undertake any action, however heinous it might seem to others, that supports the traditions of the Garou. You and your group serve as the watchdogs of tradition and Garou law.

**History:** Ever since his First Change, Vasile has served as a staunch proponent of law and order. His initiation into the Judges of Doom led to a quick rise through the ranks of the Shadow Lords. Since then, he has developed a reputation as a formidable prosecutor of those who transgress the Litany. His association with the Protectors of Gaia has given him a larger base of support with which he can conduct his hunt for all those who dare to defy the laws of the Garou.

## *Leandra Silken Smiler, Harbinger of the Sun's Death*

**Breed:** Homid

**Auspice:** Ragabash

**Tribe:** Shadow Lord

**Nature:** Conniver

**Demeanor:** Gallant

**Physical:** Strength 2 (4/6/5/3), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 5 (7/8/8/7)

**Social:** Charisma 5, Manipulation 5 (4/2/2/2), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3)

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 1, Primal-Urge 3, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 4

**Skills:** Drive 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Leadership 3, Melee 2, Performance 2, Seduction 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Enigmas 3, Investigation 2, Linguistics 1, Occult 3, Rituals 4

**Backgrounds:** Resources 3

**Gifts:** (1) Blur of the Milky Eye, Fatal Flaw, Open Seal, Persuasion, Smell of Man; (2) Blissful Ignorance, Jam Technology, Luna's Armor, Sense of the Prey, Taking the Forgotten; (3) Disquiet, Open Moon Bridge, Paralyzing Stare, Reshape Object; (4) Cocoon, Luna's Blessing, Open Wounds, Whelp Body

Rage 5, Gnosis 7, Willpower 7

**Rank:** 4

**Rites:** (Mystic) Rite of Binding, Rite of the Questing Stone, Rite of Talisman Dedication; others as needed

**Fetishes:** none

**Image:** Leandra's Homid form is a willowy, fetching woman in her late 20s. Her long black hair falls in waves down her back. Though not astonishingly beautiful, she enhances her appearance to make herself as attractive as possible. She dresses in dark clothing, suitable for the company she keeps. In Crinos form, Leandra's seductive nature disappears and she gains a lithe ferocity. Her Lupus form is that of a small, sleek black wolf.

**Roleplaying Notes:** You find it immensely amusing that a Ragabash like yourself has risen to such a position of power within an organization that includes cadavers and demented fae. You know that your talents in seduction and persuasion are responsible for your current role as chief negotiator and "front-person" for the Harbingers. You take pride in your ability to convince the other members of your group that you are serious about all this silliness. The idea of plunging the world into darkness intrigues you, though, so you will probably stick with the Harbingers until something



better comes along. After all, how many other groups (particularly within your tribe) would allow you to assume the reins of control? You know a good thing when you see it.

**History:** Leandra has literally clawed her way to a position of respect within a tribe that has little respect for those of her auspice. Her association with the Harbingers has given her the perfect opportunity to exercise her natural gifts of persuasiveness and cajolery to their fullest. She sees this group as a stepping stone to bigger and better things, however, and will sell them out in a heartbeat if she thinks she can advance herself further with another group.

### ***Guliera Moonsister, Sept of the Prophecy***

**Breed:** Homid

**Auspice:** Galliard

**Tribe:** Black Fury

**Nature:** Traditionalist

**Demeanor:** Confidant

**Physical:** Strength 2 (4/6/5/3), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5)

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 4 (3/1/1/1), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3)

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Brawl (jiu-jitsu) 4, Dodge 4, Empathy 4, Expression 5, Primal-Urge 3, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 3, Leadership 3, Melee 2, Performance 5, Repair 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Enigmas 4, Investigation 3, Linguistics 2, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 1, Rituals 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Resources 2, Rites 3

**Gifts:** (1) Call of the Wild, Heightened Senses, Mindspeak, Persuasion, Sense Wurm; (2) Curse of Aeolus, Hidden Depths, Jam Technology, Mantle of the Land, Proclamation of Action; (3) Coup De Grace, Reshape Object, Song of Rage, Veil of the Mother, Wyld Spirits; (4) Bridge Walker, Motherly Guardian

Rage 6, Gnosis 7, Willpower 8

**Rank:** 4

**Rites:** Any appropriate

**Fetishes:** Maidenstone

**Image:** At almost age fifty, in Homid form Guliera is a woman of average height. Though she once had greater muscle mass, that is beginning to soften. Her light brown hair is cut short and her blue-gray eyes are wreathed with tiny lines. In Crinos form, she has black fur just beginning to gray. In Lupus form, her fur is black and her eyes more gray than in her Homid form.



**Roleplaying Notes:** You have spent most of your adult life waiting for the events that now transpire. During that time, you have tried to prepare yourself for what will come and to serve your sept. Now that you've actually experienced the birth pangs of the foretold cub, you aren't sure anymore. The prophecies speak of doom, but you wonder if it would not be better to take the child and raise it to honor Gaia. You could not be party to the slaying of a child in any case — not unless the portents were a hell of a lot clearer than they are!

**History:** Guliera has lived a full life. From a pampered beginning as the daughter of a respected jazz musician she became a welcome addition to a sept of Black Furies soon after her First Change. Despite winning Renown for her clever compositions, she felt something lacking. She briefly left the sept to marry a Kinfolk musician and have children and after the birth of her second child began having odd dreams — portentous dreams. As soon as her children were old enough to experience their First change (none did), she went in search of answers, leaving them with their father. What she found was the Sept of the Prophecy. She still sees her family occasionally, but the importance of her sept's actions claims most of her attention.

### *Eeyarlagh Twice-Born, Hive of the Wyrms's Eye*

**Breed:** Homid

**Auspice:** Galliard

**Tribe:** Black Spiral Dancer

**Nature:** Visionary

**Demeanor:** Caregiver

**Physical:** Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5)

**Social:** Charisma 5, Manipulation 5 (4/2/2/2), Appearance 4 (3/0/3/3)

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 4, Expression 4, Primal-Urge 3, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Drive 1, Etiquette 3, Leadership 4, Melee 3, Performance 3, Stealth 2, Survival 1

**Knowledges:** Enigmas 4, Investigation 1, Linguistics 2, Occult 4, Rituals 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Resources 2

**Gifts:** (1) Bane Protector, Call of the Wyld, Mindspeak, Persuasion, Sense Wyrms, Shroud; (2) Call of the Wyrms, Distractions, Dreampeak, Howl of the Banshee; (3) Allies Below, Patagia, Song of Rage; (4) Doppelganger, Shadows by the Fire Light; (5) Assimilation, Balefire, Head Games  
Rage 6, Gnosis 6, Willpower 6

**Rank:** 5

**Rites:** As appropriate

**Fetishes:** none

**Derangement:** Delusions of Grandeur

**Image:** Eeyarlagh's Homid form is sinuous and sensual. She appears as a woman in her early 20s, with curly russet



hair worn to her shoulders, tawny skin and amber eyes, all of which lend her an exotic beauty. She dresses in soft, loose clothing that emphasizes her femininity, although there is a hint of danger about her. In Crinos form, her oily black fur has red highlights, like bloody gashes. As a wolf, she is black with reddish brown hair around her mouth and eyes.

**Roleplaying Notes:** Your role is to find the child whose coming heralds the triumph of the Great Wyrms. You are destined to nurture this child and make certain that it knows the great destiny that awaits it. Whatever you have to do to make this happen, you will undertake with the assurance that the force of inevitability is on your side. You hold the vision of the future in your mind at all times. It makes the hard choices so much easier.

**History:** The Black Spirals who captured Eeyarlagh's Silver Fang mother ripped her unborn child from her womb before they sacrificed their prisoner to the Wyrms. Born prematurely, Eeyarlagh was placed in a homemade incubator within the Hive's Pit until she was old enough to survive on her own. Thus, she took the name "Twice Born" to symbolize her natural and artificial births. Eeyarlagh's madness not only gives her visions but induces her to believe that she is the destined nurturer of the metis-born cub.

## ***S'rhaagh Iron Voice, Hive of the Broken Star***

**Breed:** Metis

**Auspice:** Theurge

**Tribe:** Black Spiral Dancer

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Director

**Physical:** Strength 4 (6/8/7/5), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5)

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2)

**Mental:** Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

**Talents:** Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Empathy 1, Intimidation 4, Primal-Urge 4

**Skills:** Firearms 2, Leadership 4, Melee 2, Stealth 3, Survival 4

**Knowledges:** Enigmas 5, Linguistics 2, Occult 5, Rituals 5  
**Backgrounds:** Resources 3

**Gifts:** (1) Bane Protector, Sense Wyrms, Shroud, Spirit Speech; (2) Blood Omen, Burrow, Command Spirit, Curse of Hatred, Ears of the Bat, Sight From Beyond, Wyrms Hide; (3) Foaming Fury, Mental Speech, Pulse of the Invisible, Unseelie Faerie Kin; (4) Crawling Poison, Grasp the Beyond, Spirit Drain, Wither Limb; (5) Feral Lobotomy, Madness, The Malleable Spirit, Totem-form  
Rage 8, Gnosis 10, Willpower 4

**Rank:** 5

**Rites:** any that seem appropriate

**Fetishes:** any that seem appropriate

**Metis Deformity:** S'rhaagh's vocal cords are so deformed that his voice sounds like an iron file rasping across a metal grate.

**Derangement:** Inner Voices

**Image:** S'rhaagh appears to be a young man in his mid-20s, with stringy, white blond hair and pale green eyes. He might be attractive if he paid more attention to his usually slovenly appearance. His Crinos form resembles a pale hyena-thing with mangy patches. In Lupus form, S'rhaagh looks like a sickly-gray wolf with tangled fur.

**Roleplaying Notes:** The black hole speaks to you in your dreams and sometimes during your waking hours. The Fallen Singer announces the coming of the child whose sacrifice will trigger the end the world. You have been chosen to take the child to the place of sacrifice at the edge of the universe. Those who stand against you must be made to see the truth. They, too, need to hear the song of the Singer.

**History:** Raised within the confines of a Black Spiral Pit, S'rhaagh has never known anything resembling a normal life. His early exposure to the vileness at the core of his home Pit has put him in touch with the voice that he claims comes from Yakecen, the Fallen Singer. S'rhaagh's grasp of the principles of magic and the supernatural have gained him much respect among his packmates. He has traveled extensively in the Umbra, visiting many of the Wyrms' dark places and gaining insights about the nature of the voice that speaks in his mind.

## ***Reginald Vaughn, Pentex Section 12***

**Nature:** Deviant

**Demeanor:** Confidant

**Physical:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Intimidation 3, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Drive 3, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Leadership 3, Repair 2, Stealth 3

**Knowledges:** Computer 3, Investigation 2, Medicine 3, Occult 1, Politics 2, Science (Cloning) 4

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 3, Resources 4

**Powers:** Immunity to the Delirium

Willpower 9

**Image:** Despite his muscular physique, Reginald Vaughn looks very much the archetypal scientist. He dresses in casual, conservative clothes and favors lab coats whenever he can get away with wearing them. His inoffensive manner and unremarkable features lead others to underestimate him. He speaks softly and persuasively.

**Roleplaying Notes:** You have a fascination with biology and the human body — including all its variant forms. You know something of shapeshifters and want to know more about their breeding and growth patterns. The exist-



ence of this metis-born cub offers you a unique opportunity to conduct numerous tests on it in order to determine its limitations and its potential as a subject for your cloning experiments.

**History:** Ever since he joined Pentex after the realization that his Silver Fang blood would never result in a transformation into a werewolf, Vaughn has tried to find ways to isolate and manipulate the "werewolf factor." His experiments have resulted in some interesting (though usually not viable) test subjects and Pentex considers him a sound investment. Vaughn's role as a pioneer in clone science gives him a certain status among his peers and he has no trouble acquiring funds and resources for his projects.

### ***Star-spirits***

Most of the Incarnae's special guardians (such as Eshtarra's pack or Nerigal's Weapons) are Star-spirits who have chosen to bind themselves to a single Incarna's service. If Storytellers feel these are too tough for some troupes, feel free to make them Gafflings of lesser strength. You know your own chronicle best.

Rage 9, Willpower 10, Gnosis 8, Power 50

**Charms:** Airt Sense, Reform, Flare (cost: 5, sends a bolt of powerful energy at an opponent, doing three dice of aggravated damage. The Star-spirit may double the cost for six dice.)



# the *Rage Across* HEAVENS

## *The Prophecy Fulfilled*

*The orb of the Wyrms opens in the heavens, and madness shall rule the skies. So read the prophecies — and they are true. The Red Star has become visible, and the blasphemous consummation has come to pass. The stars themselves shake at the fires that have begun to burn. The Reckoning is upon the Garou Nation, and nothing shall be the same.*

## *The Eye of the Wyrms Opens*

To the Garou, the Year of the Reckoning is a time of dire omens coming true. **Rage Across the Heavens** is the sourcebook about these prophecies and the celestial influences that govern them. It details the greater forces at work in the Umbral skies, and provides a glimpse of the actual form the Apocalypse will take. What's more, it provides a complete story embroiling the players directly in the events of the Year of Reckoning. It all begins here.

### **Rage Across the Heavens includes:**

- More details on Garou cosmology, from the night skies to the Aetherial Realm
- A complete story, Anthelios Rising, that puts you in the heart of events that shake Garou society forever
- Prophecies, Gifts, astrological Merits & Flaws, fetishes from the Aetherial Realm and more



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